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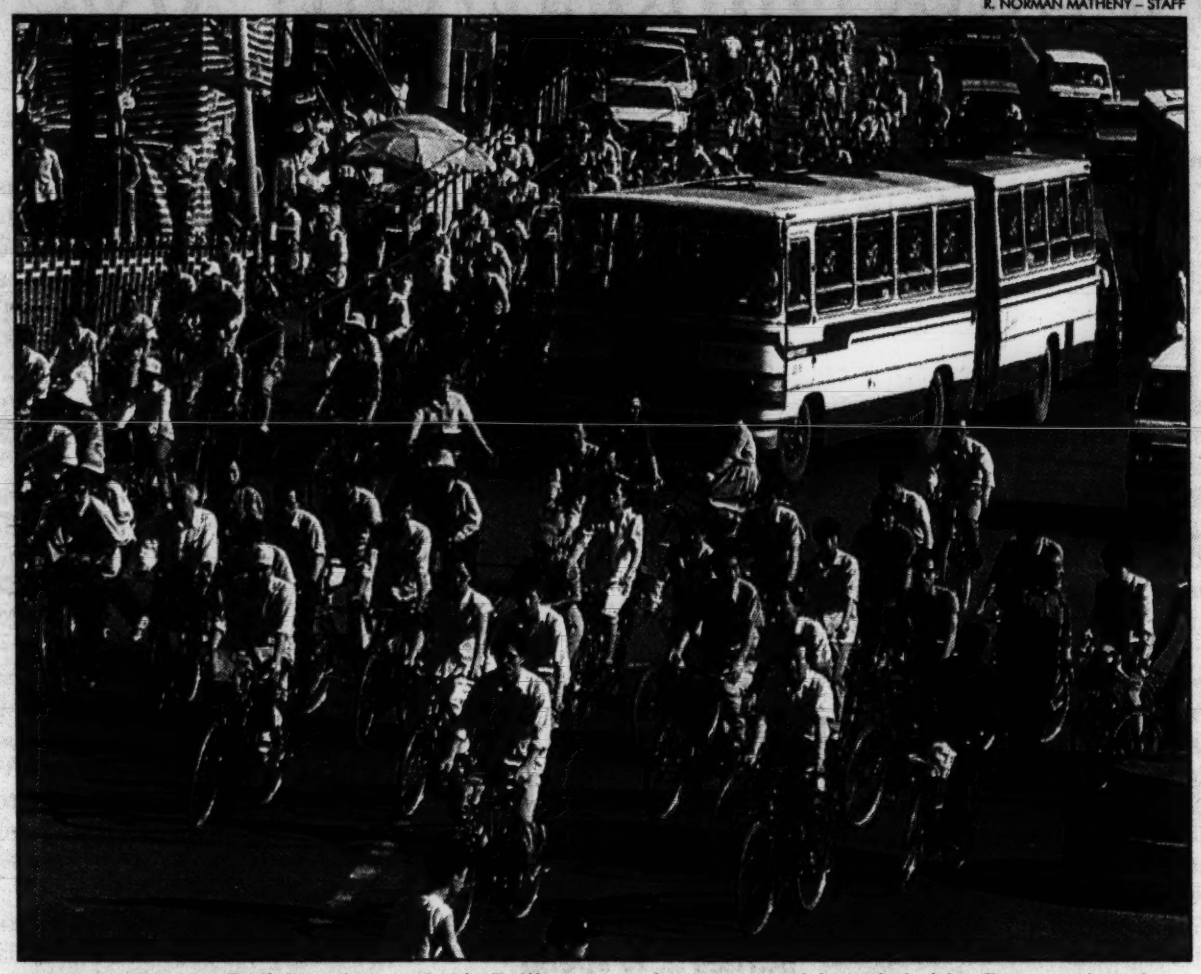
R. NORMAN MATHENY – STAFF



HEADING FOR WORK: *Rush hour is crowded in Beijing as people move to and from their jobs. Poor rural workers, unable to make ends meet at home, have been taking advantage of economic growth in the cities; their migration has eroded government controls on residence, jobs, and family life.*

Rural Laborers Seek Fortunes In Burgeoning Chinese Cities

Advent of 'floating population' erodes Beijing's social controls

By Sheila Tefft

Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

JINAN, CHINA

FOR seven years, farmer Yang Yufu has remade shoes, fixed appliances, and sold glasses and plastic buckets to scratch out a living in the city.

In the best of months, he earns almost $100 to rent two rooms and support his mother, brother, and sister. Only his father remains at home to farm the tiny family plot in Zhejiang Province and maintain the family's claim to the land.

"The main problem in our county is there is so little land, but the population is growing," said Mr. Yang, who lives in Shandong's provincial capital without a permanent registration.

He left his home in Zhejiang because the family could not live on the meager farm income, and job opportunities nearby were scarce.

Millions of poor rural Chinese are on the move, flooding fast-growing coastal provinces and eroding government control of the country's huge population.

This "floating population," including job-seekers, tourists, and students, has helped fuel the prosperity sweeping China's eastern seaboard, the vanguard of market-style economic reforms.

Their presence in the cities, now allowed on a temporary basis of up to one year, reflects looser social controls in China, where residency registration has been a cornerstone of Communist power. Each Chinese is registered to live in a certain place, and until now was not allowed to relocate without official approval.

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School Vouchers Face Major Test In California

Plan to use public funds for private schools could be the first ever adopted at state level

By Scott Armstrong

Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

LOS ANGELES

CALIFORNIA is taking up the controversial issue of school choice in a move that could fundamentally alter public education in the nation's largest state and shape policy nationwide.

A sweeping initiative will be on the November ballot that would provide parents with state-funded vouchers to help pay tuition at private or parochial schools.

If approved, California would become the first state to take tax money from public education and allow it to be spent on private tuition.

"The vote will be very important," says Michael Kirst, a professor of education at Stanford University. "It would be the first time in the history of the United States that a state had instituted a voucher system."

School choice has long been championed by some conservative and business groups as a way to improve education by opening it up to the rigors of the marketplace. They argue it gives all parents the opportunity to choose where their children will go to school and would make institutions more responsive to students' needs by forcing them to compete for pupils.

Critics, including teachers' unions, say it would further damage already underfunded public schools and lead to a two-tiered education system.

Voucher systems were a central tenet of the Bush administration's "America 2000" program to revitalize education. The Clinton administration opposes private school vouchers – even on an experimental level – though it does support choice among public schools.

Vouchers are being tried in a few localities, most notably Milwaukee. Several states are considering similar programs. But the initiative in California, which

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US Backs Up UN in Somalia, Protecting Its Investment

By Scott Peterson

Special to The Christian Science Monitor

MOGADISHU, SOMALIA

DESPITE handing over control of the massive relief and recovery operation in Somalia to the United Nations, the United States seems intent on protecting its investment here by helping to ensure the UN will not fail.

The new UN Operations in Somalia (UNOSOM II), backed by a 20-plus nation force of 28,000 soldiers, calls for maintaining peace between 15 clan factions by deploying troops throughout Somalia, disarming Somali factions, and rebuilding civil institutions. At $1.5 billion for the first year, UNOSOM II is the world's most expensive field operation.

The operation's aim, according to UN officials, is to rebuild Somalia from scratch.

"Our mission is accomplished," said Marine Lt. Gen. Robert Johnston, commander of the US-led forces in Somalia, before handing control of the operation to the head of UNOSOM II forces, Lt. Gen. Cevik Bir.

But he made American interest in the UN operation clear, adding: "It has been worth every penny we spent to end the famine. But 18 troops were lost, and those casualties will not be worth it

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UN's Green Activist
Elizabeth Dowdeswell is out to polish the tarnished reputation of the UN Environment Programme.
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Radio's Smiling Voice
As a 'founding mother' of 'All Things Considered,' Susan Stamberg saw the fledging show grow up.
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Philip Glass Debuts 'Orphée'
The modernist composer uses Jean Cocteau's 1949 film as the basis for a new opera.
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'Safe Havens' for Muslims Draw Fire – on Capitol Hill

THE Clinton administration may have resolved the question of United States involvement in the former Yugoslavia – at least for the time being – but the president's agreement to set up six "safe havens" for Bosnian Muslims is drawing withering fire on Capitol Hill.

"We are legitimating genocide," Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan (D) of New York said Sunday. "The moral basis of the world international order in the aftermath of Bosnia is weakened as it has not been since the 1930s."

Senate minority leader Bob Dole (R) of Kansas said he was "deeply disappointed" by the agreement Secretary of State Warren Christopher reached over the weekend with European foreign ministers. The Republican senator added that, in his view, the plan "offers little if any hope of ending the war in Bosnia. Moreover, it amounts to writing off Bosnia as a state by ratifying the status quo on the ground."

But the agreement did find some defenders in Congress. House majority leader Richard Gephardt (D) of Missouri said Clinton had "shown strong leadership."

Speaking on CNN's "Newsmaker Sunday," Mr. Gephardt said: "I think if he had gone off unilaterally with air strikes, arming the Muslims, if he was out of sync with the UN and European allies, he'd be even subject to more bitter criticism. I think he's done the best with a very tough and bad situation."

Health care endgame

Which way on health care? It's getting close to unveiling time for the president's health-care reform plan, but there is still no agreement among Clinton's advisers.

One group, led by Hillary Rodham Clinton, advocates mandating a comprehensive package of health benefits for every American, covering doctor services, in- and out-patient hospital care, emergencies, pediatric care for sick and well children, checkups, family planning, mental health, and long-term care.

But some economic advisers urge the president to propose a less ambitious program that would be easier to implement, both politically and economically. Their alternative would limit the number of doctor and hospital visits. Higher co-payments and deductibles also would be required as another way to hold down costs to employers and government.

A high-level White House meeting to go over the issues is scheduled for today. Clinton apparently hopes to reach a decisions in as little as two weeks.

Movers-and-shakers watch

Defense Secretary **Les Aspin** leaves budget battles behind to visit Europe this week. He will attend his first NATO defense ministers meeting in Belgium today and tomorrow and then visit US military personnel in Italy.... The Chicago Sun Times reports that a federal grand jury is investigating charges that taxpayers have paid thousands of dollars in rent to Rep. **Dan Rostenkowski's** family for two buildings housing his offices and a local Democratic Party organization. The powerful Democrat, who chairs the House Ways and Means Committee, is also being investigated for a host of other alleged improprieties.... **Ross Perot** urged Americans to rally behind a bipartisan deficit reduction plan proposed by Sen. **David Boren** (D) of Oklahoma, which calls for more spending cuts and fewer new taxes than President Clinton's proposal. The billionaire's endorsement came at a weekend rally in Kansas City.

Up, up, and....

From the "when it rains it pours" department: The first trip arranged by the reorganized White House travel office headed by President Clinton's cousin barely got off the ground Saturday when a plane hired by the office was delayed by mechanical problems.

The Midwest Express plane hired by the office to fly the press to New Hampshire to cover a commencement speech by Clinton sat at Andrews Air Force Base for more than an hour as mechanics replaced a leaky fuel line.

The White House had been hoping to put the travel office controversy – already being dubbed "travelgate" by some – behind it. But the grounded airplane didn't make that task any easier.

– Compiled by Max Boot

NATIONAL

Congress Takes New Look At Superfund's Many Woes

Only 54 of more than 1,200 sites on priority list have been made safe

By Brad Knickerbocker
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

ASHLAND, ORE.

IT seemed relatively simple in 1980: Identify the few hundred hazardous-waste sites around the country, charge the polluters a fee, and clean up the sites. End of problem.

But the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act, or "Superfund," has become an environmental, bureaucratic, and political nightmare. The list of potential problem sites has grown to about 35,000 and continues to grow. Of the more than 1,200 or so worst sites (those on the "National Priorities List"), just 54 have been cleaned up to the point at which they are off the list. And only another 164 have had cleanup construction completed despite tens of billions of dollars spent from public and private sources.

Of those billions, most of the money – 70 percent by some estimates – has gone for lawsuits, making it what some cynics call "the attorneys' endowment fund."

"Superfund has become the program everybody loves to hate," says Rep. Al Swift (D) of Washington, who chairs the House subcommittee that deals with hazardous materials.

Carol Browner, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administrator, points to some good results from the law: thousands of short-term cleanups that have reduced public-health risks, more voluntary efforts by businesses and municipalities to prevent pollution, and the development of new hazardous-waste control and cleanup technologies.

Cleanup cost staggering

Still, Ms. Browner said in recent Senate testimony: "The job we face cleaning up hazardous-waste sites seems more formidable than ever." By the time all sites are made safe, according to some estimates, the total cost could reach $1 trillion.

Superfund – the largest EPA program – is up for congressional reauthorization this year, and the way lawmakers deal with it in coming months could affect most everyone in this country.

Sen. Frank Lautenberg (D) of New Jersey, who chairs the Senate subcommittee that oversees the law, points out that 41 million Americans live within four miles of a hazardous-waste site.

Much of the costs to date have gone to settle legal disputes between corporations charged with pollution and their insurance companies. Among the issues here is whether cleanup costs constitute "damages" under liability-insurance policies.

Everyone affected

"The American legal system faces an environmental liability-insurance crisis," Kenneth Abraham, a University of Virginia law professor, told an American Bar Association meeting last month. "It is a very substantial drag on the economy [which] affects everybody because indirectly it adds to the cost of almost everything."

'It forces responsible parties ... to spend enormous resources protecting their interests in court, rather than working at sites.'

– John Johnstone, industry spokesman

Part of the problem, critics say, is that Superfund's principle of "make the polluter pay" sweeps the relatively innocent and blatantly guilty into the liability net. Its "joint, several, and retroactive" provisions mean that minor parties can be just as liable as major polluters.

In some cases, a property buyer can be held as responsible as a prior owner who did the polluting – and may now be bankrupt or difficult to find.

"Literally, everyone touched by Superfund's liability complains about its inequities," says John Johnstone, board chairman and chief executive officer of the Olin Corporation and spokesman for the Coalition on Superfund, a group of manufacturing, chemical, and insurance companies. "It forces responsible parties – sometimes hundreds of them at an individual site – to spend enormous resources protecting their interests in court, rather than working at sites."

In her testimony, Browner posed what she called "the most vexing question of all: How clean is clean?"

"Should cleanups allow some contamination to remain if public health is protected, or should all sites be restored to their original state, no matter what the cost?" she asked. "Should the level of cleanup of land and ground water be dependent to some extent on the post-cleanup use of those resources?"

This latter point is one that "potentially responsible parties," as many corporations now find themselves categorized, would like to see addressed in Superfund reform.

In other words, they assert, if another manufacturing plant is going to be built on a hazardous-waste site, then it should not have to be returned to a pristine state. Environmentalists see this argument as an excuse to get around the law.

Superfund sprung from the 1978 controversy at Love Canal in upstate New York. Over the years, concern about other toxic-waste sites has prompted a large and rapidly growing grass-roots environmental movement. Because blacks and Hispanics are nearly four times as likely to live near a hazardous-waste site as others, the issue has also spawned an "environmental justice" movement.

Industrial and municipal-waste sites account for most of the problem. (City landfills number 238 sites on the National Priorities List.) But it has become clear that Uncle Sam is one of the worst polluters. Physicians for Social Responsibility reported last week that some 11,000 sites at 900 Defense Department and Energy Department facilities are contaminated with chemical or radioactive materials, or both.

Reforming program

Browner has set up a working group of experts from businesses, governments, environmental groups, and universities to advise her on improving Superfund.

Mr. Lautenberg, who will play a key role in reauthorizing the program, says reform must be based on: speeding up cleanups (which now average more than 10 years), spending less money on lawyers and more on making hazardous-waste sites safe, ensuring fairness for small business and municipalities, and eliminating "the waste, fraud, and abuse that has squandered cleanup dollars and slowed cleanups."

San Francisco's Frank Jordan tries to prove that a nice guy can run City Hall – but he hasn't had an easy time lately

Trials and Tribulations of a 'Citizen Mayor'

By Daniel B. Wood
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

SAN FRANCISCO

IN the late evening shadow of the Bay Bridge, self-proclaimed citizen Mayor Frank Jordan is caught repeating several of the "offenses" that have earned him a reputation as this city's most unpopular official in decades.

"Well, this crowd has been gathering for me for several minutes so I probably should wind this up," he tells a reporter by cellular phone from his idling limousine.

Offense No. 1: too accommodating, too polite. Offense No. 2: meeting with community activists at the media-blind hour of 7:20 p.m. (no photo ops, no credit). Offense No. 3: working too hard with neighborhood citizens who can't generate the same kind of political capital as lobbyists back at City Hall.

A non-career politician

Former Police Chief Jordan, a Democrat, swept then-Mayor Art Agnos out of office in a throw-the-bums-out fury in January 1992. Jordan promised the city a new reign of decency and competence. By popular accounts – reflected in the press and opinion polls – he has delivered fully on the former and little of the latter.

In part, Jordan is a victim of trends that have felled other urban leaders around the country – namely a decline in federal funds even as housing, health, welfare, crime, and education problems have soared. But now the question is increasingly being asked around here: In an era of growing disgust with careerist politicians, and burgeoning calls for term limits from city hall to Congress, can political novices, or nice guys, hold the reins of power?

"You have a man here without malice, who doesn't eat, live, and drink politics and revenge," says Quentin Kopp, an independent state senator from San Francisco. "Instead of being given his due, that's made [Jordan] an easy mark. He's been beaten up by the gossip columns like nobody's business."

"It's a relief to find a San Francisco politician that is not instinctually predatory," adds San Francisco Supervisor Carole Migden (D). "But despite Frank's achievements, it has made for a sense of power vacuum."

To become the city's 40th mayor, Jordan campaigned on a moderate, centrist platform, promising to improve basic city services and get San Francisco back on track after years of increasing crime, homelessness, and blight. Jordan had never held elected office before, but had been the city's police chief from 1986 to 1990.

Jordan's tenure started with embarrassing staff shake-ups, exposes of incompetence, and cries of nepotism over bungled appointments. Then the mayor was handed the city's worst fiscal crisis in history – a $300 million budget shortfall – and the threatened loss of the San Francisco Giants, the professional baseball franchise. He stumbled quickly into the worst ratings of any modern mayor.

"When you elect a citizen mayor, you understand the ramping up to speed will take a little longer," says Richard Rapaport, a political commentator. "Frank has never been able to get ahead of the insider journalists who keep setting the tone and put him on the defensive."

The former police chief-turned-mayor has been forced to grapple with staff shake-ups and budget crises, as well as accusations of nepotism and incompetence.

Yet his successes are many and easy to find.

Some notable victories

In his first year, Jordan balanced the city budget without loss of services. That meant surviving a 10 percent cut of the city's overall $2.4 billion budget, but not being able to make good on several campaign promises – from tidying up the homeless problem to tightening law enforcement.

He brought together a coalition of businessmen to save the baseball team, when most in the city had written off a move to St. Petersburg, Fla. He has revamped the city Planning Department to streamline a permitting process that had stalled both real estate and business start-ups for years.

To keep a lid on the city's burgeoning AIDS epidemic, he circumvented California laws preventing clean needle exchanges for drug addicts. He has revamped a city emergency department and has presided over a return influx of investment banking, bio-tech, medical, and other corporate headquarters, not to mention several major construction projects, including a $2.4 billion airport remake.

"Despite all these things, Jordan's image in the press is that of a goalie with pucks being shot at him from all sides," notes Larry Kamer, a political commentator.

A fiasco last week over Jordan's attempted firing of Ben Hom, the head of the Redevelopment Agency Commission, is the latest case in point. A front-page story in a local newspaper quotes Mr. Hom's attorney, Fred Furth, blasting the mayor for accusing Hom of abuses in office. Hom, an appointee of a previous administration, had been accused of illegally soliciting a contribution to a Jordan fund-raiser and improperly trying to influence staff members' decisions.

"In other cities, the mayor would have cut a back-room deal to give Hom a promotion to shut him up," says Jim Wunderman, Jordan's new chief of staff. "Here, Frank has allowed a situation to become public that has been buried by previous administrations for the sake of politics. And he's having to take the heat for it."

Last week brought more bad news for Jordan. The current city budget will have to be trimmed by $200 million by June 1, forcing over 1,000 layoffs, cutbacks in services – and higher taxes, which would break a campaign promise.

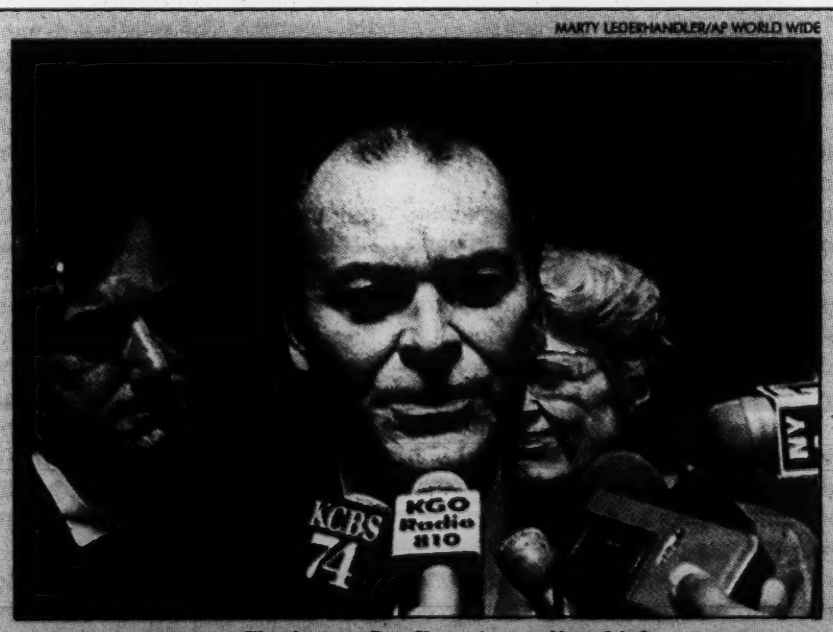
"I have had to take back a half billion in 16 months. That's not fun at all," says Jordan, complaining of state moves to usurp over $125 million in both county and city funds. "What kind of a mayor can take broadsides like this without looking bad?"

But cracks of light are beginning to beam on the Jordan saga, as well.

New staff members are expected to infuse the administration with political savvy that has been sorely lacking. One, perhaps two vacancies on the 11-member Board of Supervisors will be filled by Jordan appointments, strengthening his hand on that body. Recent forays into the neighborhoods have bolstered the confidence of civic associations who feel their voice has been heard in budgeting decisions.

"I give the mayor very high marks for what he has said and done to turn around the business climate here," says Dick Robinson, a broker for Cushman and Wakefield, a commercial real estate company. "Unfortunately you wouldn't know it from reading the papers. They tend to fixate on the revolving door of personnel problems."

MARTY LEDERHANDLER/AP WORLD WIDE



MAYOR FRANK JORDAN: *The former San Francisco police chief came to power as a reform candidate in January 1992, promising the city a reign of decency and competence. His plans were undermined by some of the same trends that felled other urban leaders around the country, including a decline in federal funds and a surge in social problems.*

INTERVIEW

Jordan Says He Dislikes Political Arena, Treats All Equally in Fiscal Plans for City

SAN FRANCISCO

MAYOR Frank Jordan (D) of San Francisco talked with the Monitor last week about his tumultuous term in office. Excerpts follow:

On San Francisco politics:

"The political arena is not a pleasant one. It's a brutal game where perception is more important than reality. I don't like it at all. I fight it and resist it every day."

On political enemies:

"They seem to take openness and honesty for weakness but they shouldn't. I think the difference is that I never do what I think is politically right for me, I do what is best for the city and that is not understood. I don't care about political posturing."

On solving current budget problems:

"I've got a package that no one is going to like because it hits all sides equally – I'm laying people off, raising taxes, freezing salaries, reopening contract talks. A good politician tries to protect some constituency. I haven't done that."

On bad press:

"They seem to be more interested in what someone I fired said or some unsubstantiated tip that my wife is using my cellular phone. Why don't they follow me out into the neighborhoods where I'm producing the news? "

– D. B. W.

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unless UNOSOM II is successful."

The same problems that caused Somalia to collapse after the overthrow of President Mohamed Siad Barre two years ago still exist. The country is awash with hidden weapons, the fratricidal clan system is intact, and, as noted by the US Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Center in its "Restore Hope Soldier Handbook," "Somalis are prone to take an aggressive, proactive approach to resolving anything perceived to be a problem."

The handbook also notes that Somalis "admire military strength and power," and this is why US forces will maintain a presence. UNOSOM II will include 2,800 logistics experts, and a US Army Quick Reaction Force of 1,300 troops that can be deployed anywhere in Somalia within 24 hours.

US Army Maj. Gen. Thomas Montgomery, second in command of UNOSOM II, says: "The message we are giving out is that if we are tested, we are prepared for a decisive response."

US military presence

The US has seeded Americans into every level of UNOSOM II, giving them effective control of the operation.

US officials at the top include: retired US Navy Adm. Jonathan Howe, the UN special envoy to Somalia; his executive assistant, who is a retired three-star US general; and General Montgomery, who, besides serving as deputy military chief for UNOSOM II, also reports directly to the Pentagon as commander of US forces in Somalia; and the influential UNOSOM II military spokesman, who is an American major.

UNOSOM II commander Bir admits that his UN operation is top-heavy with Americans: "The critical posts are manned by Americans, and I'm happy to see them in my headquarters."

The transfer of command to the UN also marks changes for the 40 relief agencies already at work in Mogadishu. Many of them, their mission limited to "emergencies," are now cutting back. Others are trying to concentrate on returning displaced people, handing out seeds and tools, and opening schools.

New expectations

Expectations have changed for UN agencies that were heavily criticized last year for their slow reaction to the famine. But with images of Somalis dying by the hundreds gone from television screens, most major donors have given little money to see that tragedy does not revisit Somalia. A modest UN appeal in March for $153 million in relief has so far reaped only $13.5 million.

For the moment, Somalia is top priority for the Clinton administration. In 1993, the US plans to spend $190 million for humanitarian relief in Somalia, double that given to any other African country, according to US Ambassador Robert Gosende. Such continued US influence may help convince Somalis that the UN has the resolve to "enforce peace," now that the famine emergency is over. But Ambassador Gosende worries that it could send the wrong impression about US long-term interests in Somalia.

"If there is a perception of a problem among Somalis, it is that the [US] has interests and responsibilities here far beyond what we do have," Gosende says.

That mistake was made before, he adds, in the late 1960s. The US government built a palatial embassy on 83 acres, including a golf course. Gosende says that such a display "was confusing and it was wrong."

To avoid a similar mistake, the "new" American Embassy will use a small former US Information Service building on the embassy compound, which Gosende says, is "just the right size."

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"Migration is like the law of nature. It is nothing to be afraid of," says Governor Zhao Zhihao of Shandong, where migrants registered as temporary state workers increased 18 percent to 1.6 million last year.

The unprecedented magnitude of the rural migrant tide, with many shifting between countryside and cities and among provinces without steady jobs or official permits, is raising alarm.

Urban unemployment is on the rise, crime is spreading, birth rates among the migrants increase outside the bounds of official controls, and worries of social unrest grow as unemployed rural migrants swamp the cities.

According to figures from the State Statistical Bureau published in the Chinese press, more than 50 million rural migrants now live in 23 large cities.

With the surplus labor force in the countryside estimated at more than 120 million people and growing, the exodus of rural workers is projected to increase at an annual rate of 10 million people during this decade, according to a report from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, a government think tank.

'Government control ... is breaking down ... over travel, what jobs they hold, and how many kids Chinese can have.'

– Western economist

"Government control over people's movements is breaking down along with control over travel, what jobs they hold, and how many kids Chinese can have," says a Western economist in Beijing.

For farmers, the migration to the cities mirrors the worsening problem of unemployment in the villages, where the government first began to dismantle Marxist economies 14 years ago.

Recently, the Ministry of Agriculture said 19 million township enterprises, which already account for one-third of China's industrial output and are reaching the limits of growth, will have to absorb 200 million surplus rural laborers by the turn of the century.

At that time, China is projected to have a half-billion farmers, many of whom face bewildering difficulties. The amount of cultivated land fell 1.5 percent last year as towns and cities requisitioned farmland for economic development zones or cash-strapped farmers let land lie fallow.

Despite four years of record crops, the income of many farmers has dropped and burdens of higher costs and fees and taxes paid to local governments have increased. As a result, Chinese newspapers report, the seasonal influx of rural job-seekers to the cities during the Chinese New Year in late January was larger than normal.

Chinese and Western analysts say that rural residents are also fleeing to the cities to escape oppressive implementation of family planning by local officials. According to a report in Wenhui Daily, a Shanghai newspaper, one-eighth of births beyond family planning targets in China are attributed to rural migrants.

The lure of the cities, with higher incomes and flashy consumer products, is so great that Chinese newspapers report cases of permanent urban residence registration being sold by corrupt officials for more than $1,000 in Zhejiang.

The migrants also are stirring urban resentment because the job market in the cities is tightening. Lacking jobs, gangs of beggars from poor provinces are being organized in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen and are creating public-order problems, according to the New China News Agency.

"The labor situation is balanced now, but in the future, there will be more job applicants than recruiters, because many work units have financial problems and can't even afford to pay their regular workers," said Liu Dong, as job-seekers scrutinized ads for cooks, maids, waitresses, and mail room workers posted on a board outside his employment agency office in Jinan.

But Chinese and Western observers predict it will be difficult to stop the exodus. On Nanmen Bridge in Jinan, clusters of farmers sell floor coverings and hire themselves out for carpentry and other home improvements.

Wang Hongfeng came with 15 others from his village in Anhui Province. Last year, pests destroyed the village cotton crop and plunged many families into debt, forcing the men to seek work in Jinan. Living in three rented rooms, the men will soon have to return home, because their temporary residence registration is running out and crops need to be planted. "But we will come again next year," says Mr. Wang.

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has the nation's largest and most diverse student population, will provide the biggest referendum yet on the idea.

The measure wasn't supposed to be on the ballot until June 1994. But late last week, Gov. Pete Wilson (R) called a special election for Nov. 2 to let voters in each county decide if they want to increase their local sales taxes to deal with a budget crunch. Under the state constitution, all voter initiatives that have already qualified for the ballot must be placed on the first available statewide ballot.

The school-choice initiative would give parents the option of accepting a voucher worth about half of what the state spends for each pupil in the public schools – up to $2,500 – to send their children to private institutions. The money would come from reductions in public-school funding.

The measure is supported by a pro-voucher organization called Excel and various religious and private-school groups. They argue that parents should have the right to spend their education tax dollars where they want. They believe greater choice will lead to reform of public schools.

"We're trying to use parental choice as an incentive to improve all schools," says Kevin Teasley of the Choice in Education League, sponsor of the measure.

Opponents include a coalition of public-school interest groups, such as the California Parents-Teachers Association, the California School Boards Association, and the California Teachers Association, the powerful union. They see vouchers as leading to the proliferation of private schools that are largely unregulated and able to pick and choose whatever students they want.

Parents who have more money and can supplement the voucher funding will opt for private schools, exacerbating inequities, they argue. "We will end up in public schools with the poorer kids and the ones who are a problem to educate," says Rick Manter of the Committee to Educate Against Vouchers.

Two states, Oregon and Colorado, have rejected similar ballot measures in the past by substantial margins. The political dynamics here, though, aren't clear-cut.

Special elections usually draw fewer voters, which means organized interest groups have more clout – aiding, in this case, the union-backed opponents. But proponents also have loyal followers likely to turn out.

Both sides promise big expenditures on the campaign – opponents up to $15 million and proponents up to $7 million. Perhaps most important, the election comes at a time when public schools in California – and particularly Los Angeles – are perceived to be in a crisis.

The dissatisfaction may prompt people to vote for the change. Historically, though, voters have been reluctant to spend tax dollars on private tuition.

About 10 percent of the state's students currently attend private schools.

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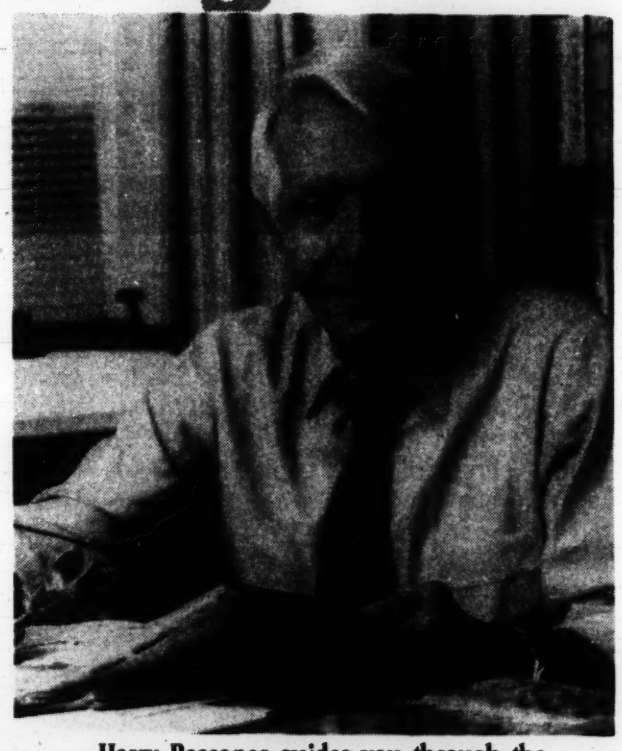

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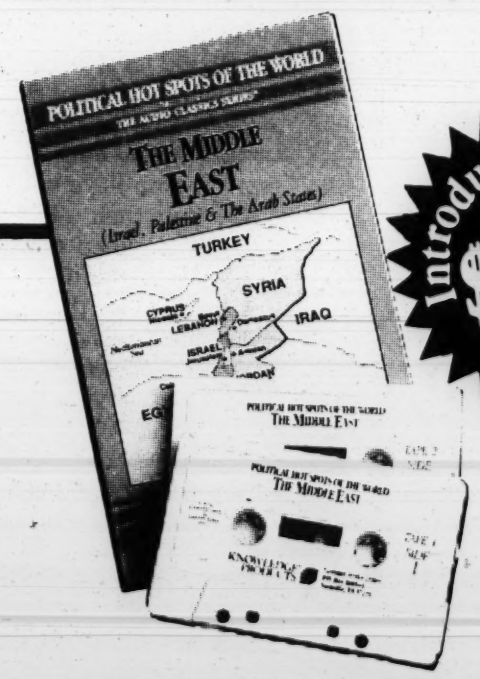

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INTERNATIONAL

S. Africa to Join US in Recognizing Angola

By John Battersby
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

JOHANNESBURG

SOUTH Africa is likely to follow the United States in granting diplomatic recognition to Angola, according to a South African official.

For Jonas Savimbi and his rebel National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), the move will mean almost total diplomatic isolation from the two countries that sustained him during 17 years of war against the formerly Marxist regime of President José Eduardo dos Santos.

"US and South African recognition will close UNITA's diplomatic options, but it could escalate the military problem in the short-term," a Western diplomat says.

UNITA officials have used the US recognition of the Angolan government as justification for refusing to sign a peace plan after six weeks of talks in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, and diplomats now worry that the war could escalate.

"I am afraid that the war is going to go on and probably intensify," said United Nations special envoy Margaret Anstee, who chaired the talks in Abidjan.

President Clinton announced recognition of the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) on May 19 after meeting with Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu.

The South African official says Pretoria is likely to announce formal recognition within a few weeks. The issue will be on the agenda at talks between South African Foreign Minister Roelof (Pik) Botha and his Angolan counterpart, Venancio de Moura, in Windhoek, Namibia, on June 4.

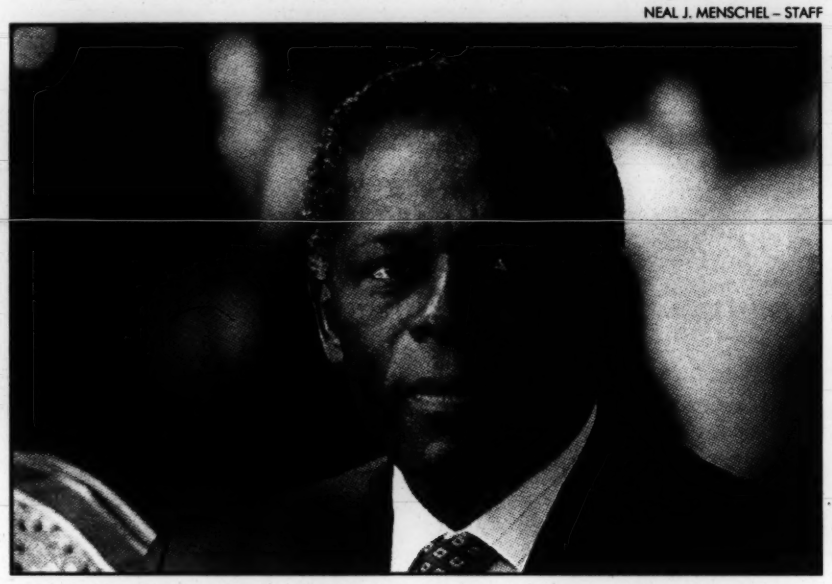
Chester Crocker, a former US assistant secretary of state for African affairs who is on a private visit to South Africa, told the Monitor that there was a case to be made "for getting the process of recognition behind us.

"But I hope this will not be read as a reduction of pressure on the MPLA or a slamming of the door on Jonas Savimbi," he said. If recognition was read by either party as a taking of sides, it would complicate the peace process.

Fifteen years of cold-war hostilities between the Angolan proxies of the US and the former Soviet Union ended with the signing of a peace accord in Bicesse, Portugal, in May 1991. The pact led to Angola's first democratic elections last September.

UNITA rejected the MPLA victory at the polls, returned to the bush, and has gained control of about 70 percent of the countryside since then through fighting. The government still holds most of the major towns and cities.

NEAL J. MENSCHEL – STAFF



JOSÉ EDUARDO DOS SANTOS: *Diplomatic recognition by the US has given Angola's president added leverage to negotiate with UNITA rebels.*

South Africa withdrew its diplomatic mission in Luanda for security reasons after violence erupted in the capital last October. Mr. Botha was declared persona non grata by the Angolan government in November after his attempts to mediate the post-ballot impasse failed.

The South African mission quietly returned to Luanda two weeks ago, and Pretoria said it would ensure that supplies do not reach UNITA through South Africa. For its part, the MPLA granted oil concessions to the South African oil firm Engen.

Diplomats hope the "get-tough" policy will persuade UNITA to accept a detailed peace proposal brokered during the past six weeks. But the Abidjan talks were suspended May 21 after UNITA refused to sign the plan, which would require the rebels to withdraw their forces from urban areas they control.

UNITA chief negotiator Jorge Valentim said after the talks that his delegation could return to Abidjan for a second round of negotiations in two to three weeks. "But UNITA cannot and will never be able to leave the cities and villages it conquered," he said.

MPLA Gen. Higino Carneiro said the government has demanded that UNITA troops at least be confined to barracks. "If UNITA thinks we can meet again in two weeks, we are prepared to think about it," he said.

US officials from the Bush administration, who are now being replaced, have made a last-ditch effort to bring UNITA into a settlement. "We've done as much as we can to bring UNITA along but it is now clear they are not coming along," a Western diplomat close to the talks told the Monitor. "Our patience has run out."

Speaking with the Monitor in Huambo April 11, Mr. Savimbi, the UNITA leader, said US recognition of the MPLA would not make a fundamental difference in his relations with the US. Diplomats regard this as bravado.

South Africa's PAC Vows to Continue Attacks on Whites

By John Battersby
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

MASAKONA, SOUTH AFRICA

LEADERS of the militant Pan-Africanist Congress (PAC) have for the first time taken full responsibility for attacks on white farmers by its military wing, the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (APLA), and vowed to continue the violence until it feels South Africa has made irreversible progress toward democracy.

"The farmers are part of the defense structures of the regime," PAC first Deputy President Johnson Mlambo says. "They occupy the land from which our people were expelled."

Speaking at a weekend funeral for APLA member Mbengeni Mudau, who was shot by police on April 28 near the eastern Transvaal town of Tzaneen, Mr. Mlambo referred to the APLA as a "component structure of the PAC which fully understands and accepts the political objectives of the PAC."

He says Mudau, who was repeatedly described at the May 22 funeral as a liberator and a hero, had "directed his war against those people who have forcibly evicted people from their land."

In the first four months of the year, 108 attacks on farmers – including 28 deaths – were reported nationwide. Half of the attacks have taken place in Transvaal Province.

Some attacks have been of a particularly brutal, victimizing whole families. Others have targeted cattle. Farmers believe the attacks are part of a national terror campaign to drive whites off the land. Until this weekend, no political group had accepted responsibility for the violence.

Masakona is a barren and stony village in the nominally independent homeland of Venda situated in the far northern Transvaal near the Zimbabwe border. The overwhelming majority of people in this and surrounding villages have been forcibly removed – some two or three times – from fertile farming land as part of the government's program of ethnic engineering whereby different tribes are assigned to different ethnic homelands.

The northern parts of South Africa have a history of brutality against black farmworkers. Farmers convicted of killing their farm workers were often let off with light sentences in the courts.

But the tide has shifted. PAC National Organizer Maxwell Nemadzivhenani says farmers are a legitimate target. "The farmers have perpetually occupied our land and are guilty of committing abuses against our people," he says. "We are very upset that the police are collaborating with the farmers."

MR. Nemadzivhenani says that if the government had continued the negotiations it began with the PAC and APLA leadership earlier this year in Botswana it may have been possible to negotiate a mutual cessation of hostilities.

"If they had followed on those talks, perhaps the farmers would not be in the plight they are now in," he says. "They should pressure the regime to discuss seriously the issue of a cessation of hostilities."

Mlambo agrees. "We feel this pressure must be sustained until we reach a point of irreversibility in the democratization process," he says. "It would be suicidal for us to release all the pressure at this stage."

The government provoked a white backlash when it opened negotiations with the PAC and APLA, and its attempts to portray the killing of farmers as a law-and-order issue has further incensed right-wing forces and farmers who have vowed to take the law into their own hands if the government does not outlaw the APLA and round up its members.

Leaders of the agricultural unions in Transvaal and Orange Free State provinces warned of a civil war if government did not act decisively by the end of May. "This proves that we are targets of terrorism and nothing else," says Piet Gouws, chairman of the Free State Agricultural Union.

The attacks have also put new pressure on the African National Congress (ANC). It faces a mounting challenge from the PAC, whose militant stance and slogans appear to be attracting radical black youths.

Police say that the shooting of Mudau occurred when he forcibly resisted arrest. Seven other people, allegedly members of an APLA unit who shot a farmer's wife, Sandra Swanepoel, on a small holding in the Litsitele area of Tzaneen, were arrested.

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UN Environment Chief Digs In, Seeks to Revitalize Program

But pledges remain low due to North-South dispute over priorities

By Robert M. Press
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

NAIROBI, KENYA

SHOVELLING garbage in a Nairobi slum for a few minutes doesn't do much practical good, but it is one of Elizabeth Dowdeswell's ways of showing the world that a new-style leader has taken charge of the beleaguered United Nations Environment Program (UNEP).

Accompanied by leaders of the Mathare Youth Sports Association, which involves about 5,000 Nairobi slum children in weekend soccer and neighborhood cleanup activities, Ms. Dowdeswell scooped a few shovels full, then hurried back to rejoin a high-level meeting at UNEP headquarters here.

"I'm impatient. I'm eager to get things done," she said in an interview.

Dowdeswell, a Canadian, will have to move quickly if she is to meet the expectations she has helped raise since taking over in January as the third executive director of the 21-year-old agency. Relatively underfunded, UNEP in recent years has been criticized for ineffectively using the funds it does receive, managing its programs inefficiently, and failing to help provide innovative solutions to global environmental problems.

"UNEP has been wasting money," says Vicente Sanchez, Chile's ambassador to UNEP. Former Executive Director Mostafa K. Tolba of Egypt never won the funding he said UNEP needed, Ambassador Sanchez says.

Dowdeswell has new opportunities to polish the agency's reputation. Meeting here May 10-21, the Governing Council of UNEP, which has members from both developing and developed nations, narrowed the gap in spending priorities between North and South, and agreed on ways to redirect funds to improve development projects.

The new budget reduces spending on data collection, among other things, and increases funding for environmental programs that have health-related aspects. As India's minister for the Environment and Forests, Kamal Nath, puts it, data on climate changes is "too abstract to people who walk 10 kilometers [six miles] to get water."

European representatives also said the European Community is willing to explore the idea of a global ban on export of hazardous waste to developing countries.

"We have to recognize the needs of developing countries," says Wolfgang Burhenne, a longtime German environmentalist and current legal adviser to the World Conservation Union, who attended the UNEP meeting.

While spending priorities have fallen more in line with the priorities of developing nations, however, donor nations failed to increase their overall commitments to UNEP.

Based on expected pledges, the Governing Council adopted a budget for 1994-5 and 1995-6 of roughly $60 million to $65 million each year, about the same as the past several years.

The task of winning greater funding from UN member states will not be easy, says Aldo Manos, special adviser to Italy's environment ministry. Dowdeswell will "have to earn the confidence given to her in very large measure," at the environmental meeting.

Developing and developed nations still disagree over the extent to which UNEP should run programs or restrict itself primarily to global studies and research. Mr. Manos says both are needed. "Pure study is not possible. They [UNEP] have to have their roots in the country, get involved," he says.

That suits the agency's new director just fine.

UNEP "will be an organization that is catalytic and coordinating," Dowdeswell says. "I won't be a prisoner here [at headquarters]. My job is around the world. If we don't have a very good idea of what needs are being expressed in Bangladesh or Peru, we're not going to be relevant. We can't operate in isolation."

Tossing out the old top-down style of management, she has called on her subordinates to come up with innovative ideas. She often slips unceremoniously into the back row of UNEP meetings. Morale at UNEP headquarters has soared since her arrival, diplomats here say.

Among other goals at UNEP, Dowdeswell has promised to seek greater employment opportunities for women.

So far, her marks are high. Sanchez praises Dowdeswell for delegating authority and having "a wonderful open management style."

Danielle de St. Jorre, minister of the environment, economic planning, and external relations for the Indian Ocean island state of the Seychelles, calls the new UNEP executive director "dynamic; active."

Prior to her UNEP job, Dowdeswell was assistant deputy minister in the Canadian Environment Ministry.

She was also head of Canada's Atmospheric Environment Service. In earlier jobs she was a human rights ombudsman in Canada, a university lecturer, and a high school teacher.

BETTY PRESS

HANDS-ON APPROACH: *Elizabeth Dowdeswell, UNEP's new executive director, works in a Nairobi slum. She says the agency must reach out to be relevant.*

China Frees More Political Prisoners, But Abuse Lingers

By Sheila Tefft
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

BEIJING

AMID the recent releases of some prominent Chinese activists, the wife of dissident Wang Juntao has called for international pressure to win his freedom.

Hou Xiaotian has urged the United States to make a specific appeal for the release of her husband, who is imprisoned for thirteen years for his role in the 1989 pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square.

Mr. Wang suffers from heart and liver disease and has threatened to go on a hunger strike on June 4, the anniversary of the Army suppression of the 1989 protests, if he is not released on bail for medical treatment and given the right of appeal.

"This hunger strike is very dangerous," she said in a Monitor interview. "I hope the US government will make my husband's case a special one, because his health is deteriorating."

Ms. Hou's urging comes as the Chinese government is reportedly ready to free one of its longest-held political prisoners, Xu Wenli. Mr. Xu has been kept in solitary confinement for 12 years for his involvement in China's Democracy Wall Movement of 1978-79.

Hong Kong human rights activist John Kamm and Western diplomats say Xu, a former electrician who edited the underground journal April 5 Forum and called for political change within the Communist system, will likely be released three years before the end of his 15-year sentence.

China has also confirmed the early release of Roman Catholic Bishop Wang Milu, jailed since 1983 and due to be freed in 1994.

Chinese political prisoners are being released in an effort by China to forestall US trade sanctions and win international backing for Beijing's bid to host the Summer Olympics in the year 2000, diplomats and human rights activists say.

President Clinton, who called for tougher action against Chinese human rights abuses during his presidential campaign, is expected to renew China's most-favored nation trading status this year, but attach conditions in June 1994 if Beijing's human rights record doesn't improve. He is also expected to seek reductions in Chinese arms sales and in its trade surplus with the US.

BUT even as some well-known Chinese go free, human rights groups and family members warn that oppression continues and thousands remain in jail. Last week, the Tibetan Information Network, Amnesty International, and Campaign for Tibet charged that Chinese authorities detained dozens of Tibetans to prevent a meeting with European Community diplomats visiting Lhasa, the Tibetan capital.

Another Tiananmen Square activist, Liu Gang, has accused prison authorities in Liaoning Province of torture and humiliation in a prison letter smuggled out by his relatives. He is also seeking a transfer to a hospital or parole for better medical care.

Earlier this month, the New York-based group Human Rights in China said that dissident Qin Yongmin was arrested for protesting Beijing's efforts to host the Olympics. Mr. Qin, who was in jail for seven years for helping organize the Democracy Wall movement, contends that China can't afford the cost of the Games, the organization said.

Despite their calls for more pressure, the flurry of releases has given the families of Wang Juntao and other dissidents some hope. In recent months, Wang was taken temporarily from his prison to a Beijing hospital and briefly received better medical care, his wife said.

In 1991, hunger strikes by Wang and fellow dissident Chen Ziming won international attention and better care. "One pays for each step of progress," she said.

Since her own imprisonment in 1990 for five months, Hou has unsuccessfully sought a passport to travel to the US. But she is unsure if she will leave.

"Things are changing now in China, and I'm not sure if I will leave," she said. "My husband thinks the Chinese people have their conscience and know how to respect human rights."

ECONOMY

Kaliningrad Free Zone Revives Even as Russia Proper Stumbles

By Justin Burke
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

KALININGRAD, RUSSIA

THE piers of the port here are packed with freighters, spider-like cranes working over them. Canadian grain is being unloaded from a barge onto railroad cars, while Russian-built tractors, aluminum, and timber are all arrayed on the quay, ready for export.

Business is booming, as Arkady Mikhailov, the port's chief director, tells it. Last year, the port handled 4.1 million tons of goods and capacity is projected to rise by a million tons a year over the next few years, he says.

It is all quite a turnaround from the late 1980s, when port activity plummeted as the Soviet economy started collapsing. At the time, Mr. Mikhailov says, chances for revival seemed bleak, especially because the port was closed to foreign ships for military security reasons.

A Russian parliament resolution in July 1990 was the turning point for the port. The legislative decision established the Kaliningrad Region as one of 13 Free Economic Zones (FEZ) in Russia. This lifted the veil of military secrecy from the area and opened it to the Baltic Sea market and beyond.

People here have high hopes that FEZ status will lead to economic prosperity. But so far concrete action has not come near to meeting expectations. Part of the reason is the failure of Moscow and Kaliningrad to work out a well-defined, coordinated development plan.

"Our activity over the last year-and-a-half could have been better spent," says Oleg Mikhailov, deputy chairman of Kaliningrad's FEZ Development Committee. "With every change in the government, we have to convince them about our plans all over again."

He adds that the Kaliningrad FEZ's operating guidelines are still being worked out. "As we understand it, it should be a place with beneficial customs tariffs and tax laws, as well as having simplified entry and exit procedures," he says. "The main goal is to raise the standard of living here."

To date, even broad FEZ targets have only been partially hit. Taxes and customs duties, for example, are not as favorable as they could be, Oleg Mikhailov says.

The FEZ's difficulties are rooted in the political chaos in Moscow, local officials say. The power struggle between President Boris Yeltsin and his parliamentary foes is preventing the government from dealing with pressing issues, leaving many Russian regions to fend for themselves.

In Kaliningrad's case, local officials want Moscow to pass legislation they say is needed for the FEZ to function properly.

Under existing legislation, 13 FEZs are functioning in Russia, mostly in the Russian Far East and the Baltic. That is about 10 too many in the opinion of many here.

SHIRLEY HORN – STAFF

In the Baltic area, St. Petersburg and Vyborg also enjoy FEZ status. The heavy concentration of FEZs makes it tough for any one port to attract the levels of foreign investment needed to thrive.

Officials in Kaliningrad naturally argue that their region, given its unique geographical position, should become the only Russian FEZ in the Baltic. For example, the region is a natural magnet for German investment. It is also Russia's only year-round ice-free Baltic port.

"Our region is ideally suited for such activity – more so than others," Oleg Mikhailov says. "All the more so because we are separated from Russia proper."

Vladimir Toropov, the deputy head of the Kaliningrad administration, adds that Kaliningrad Russians are more receptive to Western ideas than the average Russian. "There is a very special type of Russian here," he says, explaining that virtually the entire population is comprised of immigrants, who have lost the ingrained conservatism found in Russia proper.

Western companies, despite the risks, are recognizing Kaliningrad's potential. Foreign firms, including US-based Xerox and Hewlett-Packard, have already opened authorized dealerships. In addition, there are ongoing talks about establishing air links with Nordic nations via Scandinavian Airlines.

"The companies that provide infrastructure are moving in, even though today no one is sure what it will be like tomorrow," says Andrei Rudomestky, director of BOSS West, a joint venture representing Xerox.

If the bureaucratic barriers are removed and foreign capital found, plans for Kaliningrad's economic expansion seem boundless. As for the port, director Arkady Mikhailov says a project to build deep-water docks at Baltiisk, near Kaliningrad, are on the drawing board.

"Our plans are unlimited. We just have to see what the possibilities are," he says.

If the FEZ does not get up and running soon, the port and the local economy could hit a productivity ceiling before the end of the century. That is because access to the port is through a narrow canal. Without deep-water facilities, larger ships will be unable to call, limiting capacity potential, says Viktor Forostesky, the port's chief technologist.

To a great degree, Kaliningrad's fate also hinges on Lithuania and Latvia. For Kaliningrad's cargo to reach Russia proper, reliable transit links need to be secured with its Baltic neighbors. But Lithuania and Latvia are also vying to become Russia's bridge to the West.

Russian Banks Strive to Enter Computer Age

KALININGRAD, RUSSIA

AN antiquated banking system is about to receive a makeover here, as Russia strives to enter the financial modern age.

Currently, computers are something most bankers in Russia can only dream about, meaning accounting and cash transfers consume vast amounts of time.

The outdated methods are aggravating Russia's economic crisis by stimulating hyperinflationary trends. That is because businesses, squeezed by slow cash flow, must rely on government credits to stay afloat.

A Russian Central Bank pilot program to computerize debt settlement procedures aims to speed up the process, thus easing pressure on the struggling local business sector.

"Most trade in Russia is now done on a cash-in-advance basis," says Yuri Markov, deputy chief of the Russian Central Bank's Kaliningrad branch. "This is a big problem both for the buyers and the sellers, who can't supply goods until they receive the money. By introducing electronic payments we will allow industry to function more efficiently."

Kaliningrad, St. Petersburg, and Pskov are three Russian regions selected by the Central Bank for the computerization experiment.

Under the program, to be finalized in late May, a German-based firm, Siemens-Nixdorf Osteuropa GmbH, will supply about $3-million worth of equipment, software, and training at the Kaliningrad Central Bank branch, Mr. Markov says.

Siemens-Nixdorf officials in Moscow declined to be interviewed.

While Siemens-Nixdorf collaborates with Kaliningrad, United States-based Unisys Corporation is to work with St. Petersburg officials on a computerized system there, and the German NCR Corporation will build a network in Pskov.

"It's not accidental that the Central Bank has chosen these three areas for computerization," says Nina Sedykh, another deputy chief of the Kaliningrad bank branch. She adds that all three areas have close contact with the West, and are more open to new ideas.

In Kaliningrad's case, the infrastructure already is in place, including a well-developed telephone system by Russian standards, Markov says. He adds that computerization will pave the way for the eventual introduction of bank credit cards.

After a trial period, Central Bank officials in Moscow will study the three computer operations with the goal of working out a cash settlement system for all of Russia.

Deeply entrenched conservatism in the heartland, however, will make introducing new methods and technology in some regions a challenge, Markov says.

– J. B.

Military Eyes City's Economic Future

KALININGRAD, RUSSIA

IN the old days, the admirals and generals in this highly militarized region called the shots.

The Kaliningrad region was closed to foreigners, and access was severely restricted even for Russians – all in the name of military security. The region houses the Russian Baltic Sea Fleet's headquarters.

But now – with Kaliningrad viewed as a potential "fat city" economically – the military sees its own interest linked closely with private-sector progress.

"The fleet is trying to help in development in any way we can," says Vice-Admiral Valery Grishanov, chief of staff for the Baltic Sea fleet. The Navy is providing meteorological and hydrological data to civilian authorities, as well as granting limited access to the naval port and airfield.

As the Russian armed forces institute reforms amid depressed economic conditions, the Baltic Sea fleet faces a shortage of housing and funds.

The Kaliningrad Free Economic Zone is making it easier for the Navy to overcome difficulties, Admiral Grishanov says. For example, the zone could regulate and facilitate the sale of military hardware, he says. Lithuania, which is forming its Navy, already has become a big customer, he says, and is paying for building 4,000 apartments in return.

Grishanov also describes as "mistaken" reports that Russian military units withdrawing from Germany and the Baltics are being redeployed in the Kaliningrad region. The fleet will reduce the number of sailors and ships in the region 50 percent by 1995, he says.

– J. B.

Mohair Ranchers Defend Subsidies As Market Slides

Staking out a lean livelihood, ranchers berate bad press and deficit-cutting pressures

By Scott Pendleton
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

MASON, TEXAS

PHOTOS BY SCOTT PENDLETON

ANGORA GOATS FIND SHADE, MASON COUNTY, TEXAS: *Local ranchers argue that the land would be worthless if goats were not able to survive there. If Congress cuts the mohair subsidy, the region will be devastated, they say.*

RIDICULE in the news media recently over mohair subsidies has West Texas ranchers wound up like rattlesnakes ready to strike.

"The press has been so terrible on this," says Jack Wardlaw, who runs 10,000 Angora goats on 20,000 acres outside Sonora in Sutton County, Texas. Sutton is one of a cluster of 10 waterless, peopleless Texas counties that account for nine-tenths of United States mohair production – and precious little else.

To ranchers, it is bad enough that, at a time when the country is clamoring for deficit reduction, they hear the wool and mohair incentive program blasted as "one of the most wasteful government subsidies there is" by Rep. Charles Schumer (D) of New York, or as "a boondoggle par excellence" by James Bovard, an author critical of US farm policy.

They are also frustrated by stories which disapprove of ranchers who have the most goats (and expense and risk) receiving their corresponding share of the overall incentive money; which gasp at six-figure government payments as though those were pure profits; and which speak scornfully of mohair production as an obsolete industry kept afloat by taxpayers.

Worst downturn ever

Contributing to the public relations disaster is the coincidence of anti-deficit mania with the worst cyclical downturn in the history of the industry, which relies on export markets for 90 percent of its sales. Producers are leaning on Uncle Sam more than they ever have since 1954.

That year the Wool Act established a 7-cent-per-pound tariff on imports of wool products to provide revenue to the US Treasury and to fund subsidies for wool and mohair producers. As of 1991, the tariff had generated $7.4 billion, of which Washington kept $5.1 billion. Mohair producers had received $337 million of the remainder.

For the first three decades of the Wool Act, US mohair earned an average of $1.30 per pound in the marketplace, to which Washington added 18 cents. Goat ranchers got no subsidy at all in 18 of those years.

But by 1986, everything that could go wrong, did. There was a spate of warm winters. China raised a tariff barrier against mohair. Russia ran out of cash. South Africa, the world's other major producer, accumulated a stockpile of 8 million pounds of mohair, which is equal to a quarter of the world's production. The flat, smooth look in fabrics came into style, and mohair's fluffy look went out. Oil remained cheap, giving synthetic fibers a cost advantage over mohair.

And consumers in Japan, Europe, and the US were pinched by never-ending recession. "When people are out of work or think they're going to be, they don't buy $1,000 suits," says John Lawler, an Agriculture Department economist specializing in mohair.

The result: Over the past seven years producers received an average of $1.68 per pound from sales and $3 per pound from subsidies. And the situation is not improving. Mohair now sells for 70 cents per pound, down from last year's average of 86 cents and 1979's record of $5.10.

American production peaked at 32.4 million pounds in 1965, shrank to just 8 million pounds a decade later, and recovered to 17.3 million pounds by 1988. Subsidies have not prevented production from again declining, which in turn has brought down the government's mohair payout. The subsidy peaked in 1990 at $59.4 million, when production was 16.3 million pounds. Last year Washington paid $47 million to producers for under 14 million pounds of mohair, preliminary government data show.

Brian May, executive director of the Mohair Council of America in San Angelo, Texas, hopes the industry has hit bottom. Funded by $750,000 from producers, the council is trying to persuade yarn mills that the North American Free Trade Agreement would make it worth their while to set up shop in mohair counties.

Deficit cutters see red

Meanwhile, the producers' admitted dependence on Wool Act money has deficit-cutters smelling blood. Rep. Dick Armey (R) of Texas regards the act as "an income transfer from ordinary people who buy sweaters and pay taxes to a privileged special interest group."

Reporters took the cue and came calling this spring. Many ranchers who gave interviews say that their words were twisted to achieve a sensational and inaccurate effect. "We've had so much negative publicity," one member of the industry says. "We're trying to get it died down."

Mr. Wardlaw is one of the few ranchers still willing to talk to a reporter. His family has ranched for 75 years, and Wardlaw has been in the business for more than 30. The way he tells it, ranchers are not getting rich off the government. "To me it's paradise," he says of his semidesert surroundings. Sure he has land – he owns half of his acreage and leases the rest – but the land would be worthless if goats could not survive there.

At today's depressed price, Wardlaw earns $14 per goat but has $17 in costs. The incentive payment gives him an extra $6 per goat – the difference between a $30,000 loss and a $30,000 profit. Mohair earnings provide most of his income, he says, not much return for the dark-to-dark working hours put in by him, his wife, and three sons.

If Congress cuts the mohair subsidy, he says, "from the corner drugstore to the school, this region is going to be devastated." Data from the 1990 US census bear him out.

Edwards County – the most angora-dependent in Texas – had a per capita income of $7,537 in 1989 for its 2,266 people. A third of families lived below the poverty line, and more than 6 percent of homes lacked complete indoor plumbing.

Val Verde County had 13.8 percent unemployment in 1990, compared with 7.1 percent for the state. In Mason County, one home in three was built before 1939, and one in 12 lacked complete kitchen facilities.

Not one of the 10 largest mohair counties reached the state average per capita income of $12,904 in 1989. Two attained the state's 14 percent poverty rate, while the others had double that rate or more.

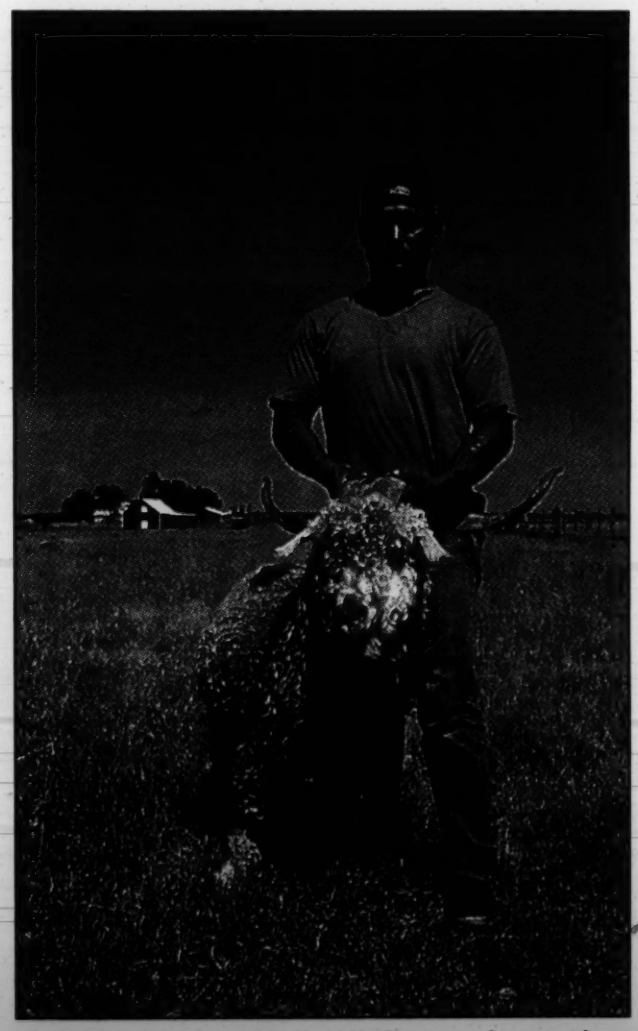
Native American ranchers

A change of program would be felt beyond Texas. Of the nation's 11,300 mohair producers, 5,200 are Native Americans, mostly from the Navajo tribe in New Mexico and Arizona. Last year 25,000 families representing 180,000 Navajos received 36 percent of their $2,150 annual income from wool and mohair.

Wardlaw regards the five-year farm program in 1990 as a contract between the government and the agriculture industry. If Congress changes it halfway through, "they're going to bankrupt lots of people," he warns.

Several bills in Congress would kill it outright, but the powerful House Agriculture Committee wants merely to accelerate the 1990 farm bill's phased reductions in the amount of subsidy a mohair producer can receive. Wardlaw dislikes the idea of bigger producers feeling all the cuts.

"To me, the American dream is the harder you work, the more you get. This [proposed payments cap] is taking it all away."



KEEPING BUSINESS IN HAND: *Freddie Torres, a farm worker in Mason County, Texas, says farming and ranching are the only jobs available in the county.*

LEARNING

Dartmouth Head Stresses Diversity

By Keith Henderson
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

HANOVER, N.H.

WITH its tree-bordered green and its white clapboard buildings, Dartmouth is an Ivy-League postcard. But over the years that image has competed with other, less positive ones: a hotbed of conflict between minorities and youthful conservatives, an impossibly expensive place to go to college, and a "party school."

James Freedman became president of Dartmouth in the summer of 1987, after five years as president of the University of Iowa. He came with strong liberal credentials (staunch defender of affirmative action, law clerk to United States Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall), degrees from Ivy League rivals Harvard and Yale, and a mandate for change.

All that immediately set him at odds with conservative elements at Dartmouth, says Michael Heyman, a professor of law at the University of California, Berkeley, and outgoing chairman of the Dartmouth Board of Trustees. Mr. Heyman refers to "the paranoia of the far right on campus, who thought [Freedman] would restructure Dartmouth and make it into Harvard."

Such concerns were more than "paranoia," says Dinesh D'Souza, a research associate at the American Enterprise Institute in Washington. An editor of the right-leaning Dartmouth Review during his student years, Mr. D'Souza says Freedman arrived at Dartmouth with "ferocious energy," which has since dissipated.

Whether or not the president ever had in mind transforming the proud old college into a university, Freedman's tenure has brought significant change – not least of which is an increased number of women at the school.

"It's quite remarkable," says David Riesman, a professor of education at Harvard who has written widely about the challenges facing college presidents, "especially for Dartmouth, given its outing club and its athletic and fraternity traditions. It says something about his aims." Next fall's freshman class will be nearly 50 percent female. According to Dr. Riesman, Dartmouth is leading the Ivy League in this regard.

Yet Dartmouth trails other Ivy League schools in the proportion of minorities on campus. This year, the figure is about 24 percent. Freedman places this issue in a broad social context: "Next to the military, universities are the institutions that have brought people of different races together," he said during a recent interview in his office. He calls conservative broadsides against political correctness (PC) "a reaction to efforts of communities like ours to attract minorities."

Freedman acknowledges the persistence of "separatism" on campuses, with black students and other groups gravitating toward separate organizations, living quarters, and even lunch tables.

"I see those manifestations as transitional, as a consequence of a lack of self-confidence," he says, noting that all incoming students, not just minorities, tend to cluster with people of similar backgrounds and experience. Dartmouth has a residence house for African-Americans, but limits the number of terms a student can live there.

"There is no watering down of academics for minorities any more than for other students," Freedman says. "People would be struck by the achievements of the strongest minority students here. They go on to Harvard Law and other top graduate schools. They're doing the same now as Jews and other groups in earlier times."

As for criticism that the great works of Western civilization are being pushed aside to make room for books by authors of various ethnic backgrounds, Freedman says it's overstated. Changes in reading lists are natural, he says. "In the '50s, we read Camus and Kierkegaard and Sartre. That's all tailed off. Freud was everywhere. I suppose that was the 'PC' at the time.... Faculty assign what they find intellectually important and suggestive. Why is it such a big issue today, if it wasn't then?"

Answering his own question, Freedman observes that student bodies in past decades were much more homogeneous: "You didn't have to worry about the 'others,' because they were no 'others.' " He remembers how surprised his own children were to look through his 1957 Harvard yearbook and find only white, male faces.

The diversity issue easily slides into the affordability issue. Freedman points out that Dartmouth is one of 12 schools in the country that have "need blind" admissions – students are accepted regardless of their ability to pay. It's a system that the president is determined to maintain, even though it means a huge outlay for financial aid.

'Next to the military, universities are the institutions that have brought people of different races together.... [Institutions of higher education] are the vehicles for upward mobility.'
– James Freedman, president of Dartmouth College

Like other colleges, Dartmouth is constrained by the rules Washington sets for government student loans. "But we have money, not federal, that we can give regardless of federal rules," says Freedman. Since he took over at Dartmouth, the financial-aid budget has risen from $12 million to $19 million.

But the rate of growth of tuition – which now hovers around $25,000 a year – has gone down for the last four years, the president says. (Former trustee Heyman warns that it could go up again, as the school wrestles with ways to keep a growing budget in balance.) Forty percent of the students at Dartmouth receive financial aid, with the average package being $12,000 to $14,000 a year, Freedman says.

"If higher education is going to charge these prices," he adds, "it has to justify it – we are the vehicles for upward mobility."

Freedman says the actual cost of educating a student at Dartmouth approaches $50,000 a year and ticks off some reasons for that figure: the competition for highly paid faculty, as well as for specialists in fields like computers and library science; the expense of building new labs, libraries, and medical-school facilities; the recent mandate to provide new services for students, such as counseling and treatment for eating disorders.

What are Freedman's views of President Clinton's proposal to link direct government student loans to a national service program?

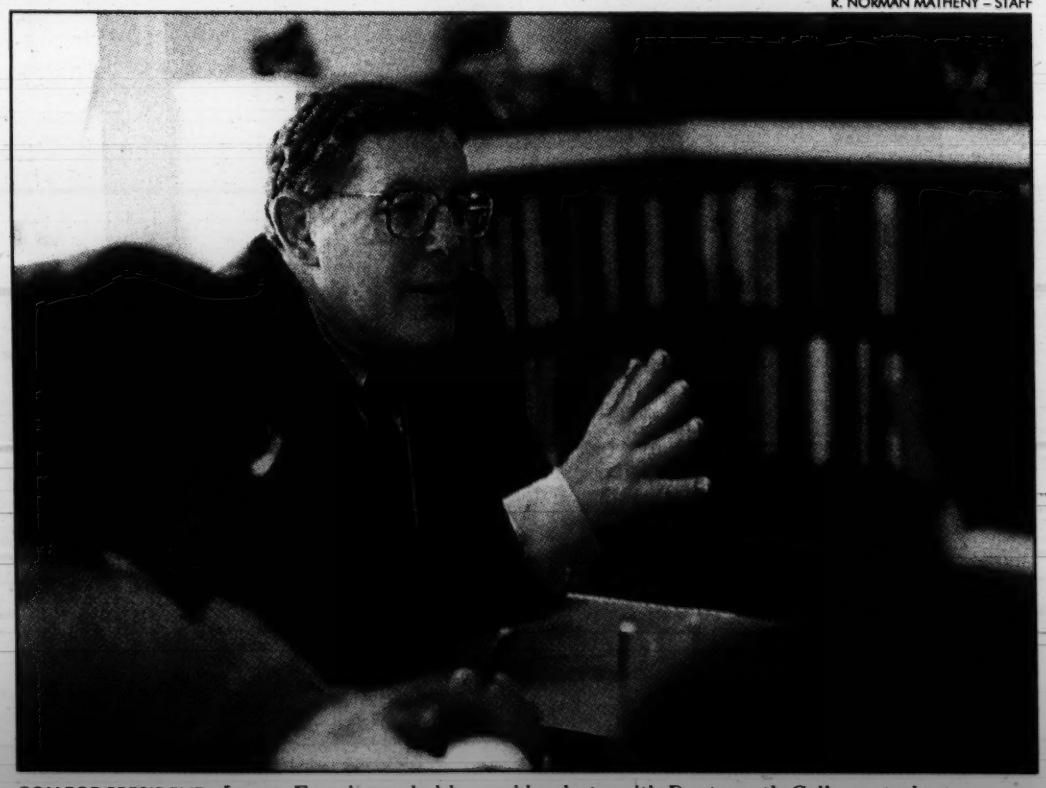
"I hope it's wildly successful," he says, but quickly adds that he has doubts about the plan's relatively small scope, the suitability of kids fresh out of college for some of the "service" jobs envisioned, and the cost, which has been estimated at $15,000 to $20,000 a year per participant. "We'll want to be sure they put that much back into the economy," Freedman says.

Financial matters are a preoccupation for any college president, but Dartmouth's chief has immersed himself in academic reform as well.

Last year the school announced the first major reworking of its degree requirements in 70 years. Freedman makes no bones about his desire to banish the image of Dartmouth as a party-prone, hard-drinking place in the woods of New Hampshire. "The message of the last six years," he says, "is that we want to be seen as a more academically and intellectually serious place than in the past."

In carrying out his plans, Freedman has had to walk a line between competing parts of the Dartmouth community, Riesman says. "The liberal faculty and the loyal, traditionalist alumni in Hanover create a kind of volatile environment," he notes. "But Freedman seems to have overcome it."

R. NORMAN MATHENY – STAFF



COLLEGE PRESIDENT: *James Freedman holds weekly chats with Dartmouth College students.*

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HANOVER, N.H.

A FEW years ago, some
bers of the faculty an
ministration at Dartm
College noticed that while 4
cent of incoming freshmen w
indicated an interest in th
ences, only 15 percent ended
science majors. This was typi
most institutions of higher e
tion, says Carol Muller
administrator with the scho
engineering at Dartmouth.

She notes further that the
tion rate away from the sci
was twice as high for women
men. Ms. Muller and other
cided that young women n
some special encouragemen
stick with their scientific in
tions. Their idea: a program
Women in Science (WIS),
immediately links fres
women to faculty members a
per-division students in their
of interest.

Muller points out that th
gram has been operating fo
three years, so it's a little ea
assess its long-term affect on
uates. But she sees some po
indicators, such as a jump
proportion of incoming wom
to 55 percent, who express a
erence for science. Muller
that may have something
with the word getting out
Dartmouth's special effort t
ture scientific careers for w

Amy Palmer, a junior, ex
emplifies the program's po
tential. She arrived at Dart
mouth three years ago with
an interest in chemistry
though her high school had
not been particularly strong
in that field. The WIS pro
gram enabled her to immedi
ately get in touch with other
women who were involved in
chemistry. For one thing, th
gram offers freshmen a list
ulty members offering inter
for women.

Ms. Palmer heard of the
on the carcinogenic effe
chromium being done by
Wetterhahn in the chemist
partment and "blitzed" Pro
Wetterhahn about it – she us
campus's ubiquitous ele
mail system to ask about th
ect. An internship was work
for Palmer, and the result ha
three years of painstaking
haps groundbreaking, resea
her.

Palmer works in Wetter
laboratory daily, often on
ends. During the current te
hours in the lab sometimes t

A program at Dartmouth aims to keep undergraduate women interested in the sciences through mentoring and internships

ollege Links Women in Science

OVER, N.H.

R. NORMAN MATHENY – STAFF

BIOLOGY MAJOR: *Christina Ullrich grows mutant plant varieties for experimental work on species-specific herbicides.*

rs ago, some mem- he faculty and ad- ion at Dartmouth that while 45 per- g freshmen women nterest in the sci- ercent ended up as This was typical of s of higher educa- arol Muller, an with the school of Dartmouth.

rther that the attri- from the sciences gh for women as for er and others de- ng women needed encouragement to scientific inclina- a: a program called ence (WIS), which links freshmen y members and up- dents in their areas

s out that the pro- operating for just it's a little early to erm affect on grad- sees some positive n as a jump in the coming women, up who express a pref- ence. Muller says something to do getting out about ecial effort to nur- areers for women.

a junior, ex- rogram's po- ived at Dart- ars ago with chemistry, h school had ularly strong he WIS pro- er to immedi- ch with other re involved in

one thing, the pro- shmen a list of fac- offering internships

heard of the work logenic effects of g done by Karen the chemistry de- "blitzed" Professor ut it – she used the quitous electronic ask about the proj- ip was worked out the result has been painstaking, per- aking, research for

ks in Wetterhahn's y, often on week- e current term, her sometimes total 60 to 80 a week, since this is her "leave" term that she can use as she chooses, an option open to all Dartmouth students.

Palmer has declared a major in biophysical chemistry, a step she might not have taken, she says, except for the substantial support she got through the WIS program.

Christina Ullrich, another junior, is a biology major. She also took advantage of the program in its first year. Like Palmer, she has spent three years on the same research project – in her case, an inquiry into herbicide resistance in plants, which has required her to grow mutant varieties and try to isolate the interaction of herbicides and enzymes in plant cells. She, too, has devoted a "leave" term to the work.

'Engineering would have intimidated me a lot more if it weren't for the [WIS] program.'

– Katharine Osborne

"Something really neat about the WIS," says Ms. Ullrich, "is that you could be researching something with a huge potential impact for the world."

Ullrich's work might contribute to the development of species-specific herbicides, for instance, and Palmer's could lead to better safety measures for workers who handle chromium.

Both young women say that without the encouragement offered by WIS, they – like others – could have been intimidated by the large, introductory science courses endured by freshmen. They had – and continue to have – other academic interests, such as Russian (Palmer) and French (Ullrich).

That sentiment is shared by engineering student Katharine Osborne. "Engineering would have intimidated me a lot more if it weren't for the WIS program," she says. "The first-year prerequisite courses are huge." Her interest was sustained, however, by intern work with a professor studying lasers.

In her freshman year, Ms. Osborne says, she had some concern that the WIS program was unfair to men, who weren't being offered the same internships. But she concluded that the program was justified in addressing the special problems facing women with an interest in science. Those problems are social as well as academic. "Definitely, when you're asked about your major and you say 'engineering,' people cringe," she comments.

The rewards of pursuing the study of science may outweigh the negatives. "Now I have an idea about what life as a scientist would be like," says Ullrich, who is considering taking her interest in biology on to graduate school.

Ullrich smiles as she recalls the time in her freshman year when she overheated a growth chamber and accidentally "cooked" the mutants she had been carefully tending. That was a hard lesson in perseverance.

Professor Wetterhahn, who cofounded WIS with Muller, says students such as Palmer and Ullrich confirm the worth of the program: "They're really seasoned; I'm impressed."

But they are just two good examples among many, she adds. Wetterhahn sees "a wonderful response" from the faculty in offering internships to WIS participants. The number of internships – which include physics, math, engineering, and computer science as well as biology and chemistry – is up to 80 this year, from 40 when the program began. The goal, say Wetterhahn and Muller, is an internship for each young woman who wants one.

The internships are paid positions, notes Wetterhahn, which makes the WIS program more attractive to the 40 percent of Dartmouth students who are on financial aid. Funding for the WIS internships has come through various sources, including grants from the National Science Foundation and from corporations such as IBM, Microsoft, and Hewlett-Packard.

– Keith Henderson

Many Changes Of the Guard for Higher Education

By Laurel Shaper Walters
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

BOSTON

THE doors to college presidents' offices continue to revolve.

After a spate of high-profile university presidents announced their resignations last year, panic began to break out in much of the academic community. Some argued that the pressures were becoming too great and qualified candidates were losing interest in running troubled institutions.

A few universities did have to endure protracted searches for new leaders, and the competition for candidates may have been tougher than usual. But nearly all the major universities looking to hire a new chief executive officer for the next academic year have done so.

Here is a roundup of shifting faces in academic leadership across the country. Most of these new presidents will be starting their jobs this summer.

Richard Levin, Yale University, New Haven, Conn. Yale spent nearly a year searching for a new president after Benno Schmidt resigned abruptly last May to head the Edison Project, an entrepreneurial venture creating a nationwide chain of private schools. Mr. Levin, who will become Yale's 22nd president on July 1, is currently dean of the Yale Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. He has spent more than two decades studying and working at the school.

Nannerl Keohane, Duke University, Durham, N.C. A political-science scholar, Ms. Keohane will be the university's first female president and one of few women to lead an American research university. She is stepping down as president of Wellesley College in Wellesley, Mass., where she has been for the past 11 years.

Hugo Sonnenschein, the University of Chicago. Mr. Sonnenschein is an economist and provost of Princeton University in Princeton, N.J. He will replace Hanna Gray, who is retiring after 15 years as president of the university.

George Rupp, Columbia University, New York. Mr. Rupp leaves the presidency of Rice University in Houston to replace Michael Sovern, who has served as Columbia's president for 13 years.

Harry Payne, Williams College, Williamstown, Mass. A historian, Mr. Payne is currently president of Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y. He will take over at Williams when Francis Oakley retires in December.

Jean Dowdall, Simmons College, Boston. The first female president this 94-year-old women's college has ever had, Ms. Dowdall is currently a vice president at Beaver College in Glenside, Pa.

Several university presidents are being lured away from academia by the new political administration in Washington.

President Clinton appointed Joseph Duffey, president of American University in Washington, as director of the United States Information Agency. Mr. Duffey will leave American University in June.

Sheldon Hackney, president of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, has been nominated as chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. Claire Fagin, the former dean of Penn's School of Nursing, is serving as interim president of the university.

Meanwhile, Donald Langenberg, chancellor of the University of Maryland system, is rumored to be on the short list for nomination as director of the National Science Foundation.

MEDIA

WORTH NOTING ON TV

By Alan Bunce

■ TUESDAY

Inside the KGB *(NBC, 8-10 p.m.)*: Old secret police agencies never die, they just become fodder for American TV's apparently inexhaustible appetite for documentary exposés and reality-based programs. This one represents the first time American cameras have taken a look inside the headquarters of the former USSR's powerful, dreaded spy agency. You'll hear of KGB plans to infiltrate the Manhattan Project (during World War II, a time the Soviets were being touted as our allies), see files on Adolf Hitler and Lee Harvey Oswald (including an analysis of the latter's marksmanship), and learn other new facts. The program, filmed on location in Europe and Russia, shows viewers the heavily protected KGB training center and some advanced surveillance devices and weapons. Russian President Boris Yeltsin and former KGB leaders are interviewed for the show, and the host is James Coburn – chosen, presumably, because he's acted (and well) in several espionage films.

■ WEDNESDAY

Daytime Emmys *(ABC, 9-11 p.m., E.T.)*: They may be a daytime phenomenon, but when soap operas want to get your attention, they go prime time – as with this 20th edition of the annual awards telecast, to be aired live. Lucci and Walt Willey, stars of the hugely popular "All My Children" on ABC, are cohosts, but lots of other celebrities will be on hand during the ceremonies as presenters. One is Phil Donahue, who has garnered 19 daytime Emmys over the decades and is marking 25 years as the granddaddy of this not-always-admirable genre. Most of the presenters are soap stars, selected more or less even-handedly from the spectrum of well-known "daytime dramas." Yet it's not all soaps and talk shows. Another category is children's programming, and one of the presenters is Barney – the purple, six-foot Jurassic star (and merchandizing miracle) of PBS's popular "Barney and Friends."

Please check local listings for all programs.

Radio's Voice With a Smile in It

As a 'founding mother' of 'All Things Considered,' Susan Stamberg saw the show grow up

By Elizabeth Levitan Spaid
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

BOSTON

SUSAN STAMBERG has conducted a whopping 20,000 interviews in her radio career, so asking her to name a favorite one is a tough request.

Nevertheless, one of the self-described "founding mothers" of National Public Radio's "All Things Considered" says her best conversation was a near disaster.

It was the spring of 1977, her sixth year as co-host of the NPR show. Ms. Stamberg had settled somewhat nervously in a studio chair opposite journalist and author Joan Didion.

"I was *so* overprepared," Stamberg says in a New York-accented voice that lowers to a deep whisper when she emphasizes certain words. "I had read too much, and plus I was so impressed with her that I think it all got jammed in my head ... so I stopped, I started, I apologized again. It was really a mess."

After 15 minutes of jumbling, she ran out of uneasiness, and the conversation began to flow.

"It's a wonderful conversation in ... how she explains herself," Stamberg reflects. "She made me understand how she writes. That's a terrific thing to know."

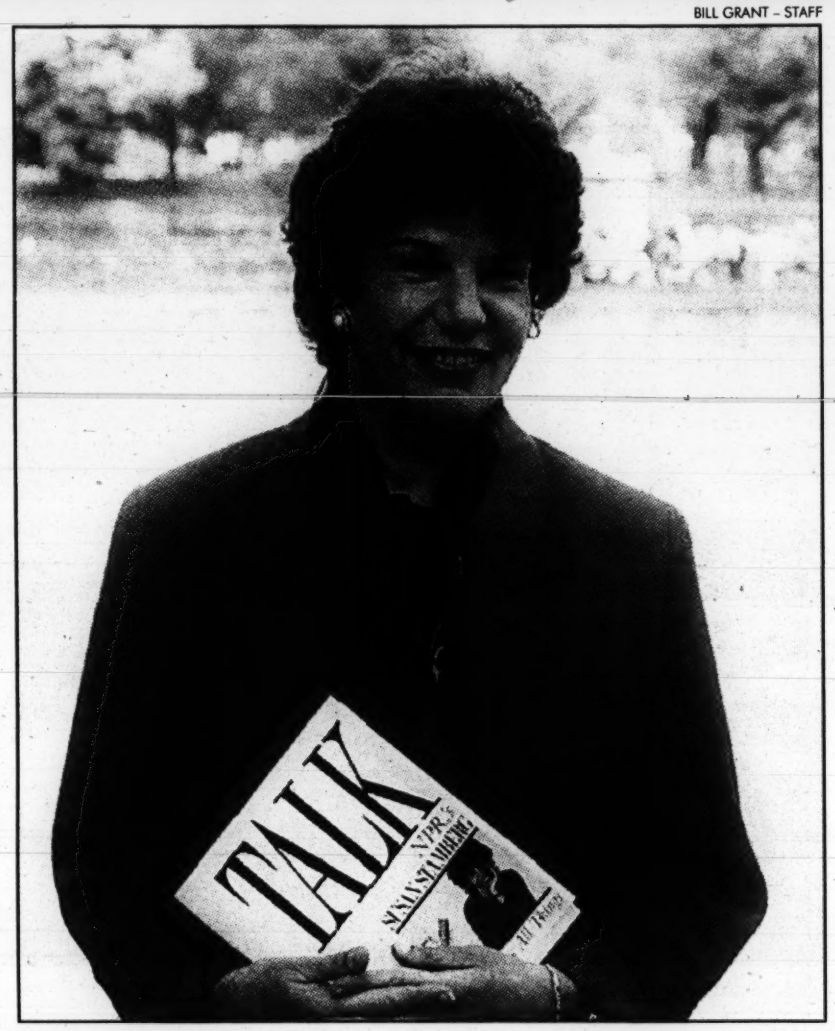
Started as a weather girl

Stamberg recounted this tale in the elegant tea room of the posh Ritz Carlton Hotel in Boston where she was staying during a tour to promote her new book, "Talk" (Random House, 380 pp., $24). The interview with Ms. Didion is one of 85 conversations in the book that begins with the turbulent days of 1971, when "All Things Considered" was just getting started, and runs through 1991. Subjects and topics range from Nixon aide John Ehrlichman on Watergate to Mrs. Ernest Hemingway on her life with the author to Annie Leibovitz on photography.

Stamberg has a friendly, down-to-earth personality and makes a stranger feel like an instant friend as she talks about her book, her work, NPR, and radio in general.

Her career began in the 1960s when she took a job as a weather girl at a small radio station. But she didn't just forecast rain, snow, or sunshine. "I thought the weather was so boring so I looked for poems about the weather I could put at the beginning of the forecast," she says. "That made it interesting for me."

BILL GRANT – STAFF



STAMBERG: *She began as a radio 'weather girl,' but found the weather so boring that she looked for poems to read at the beginning of the forecast.*

She brought this atypical approach to "All Things Considered," where her questions are often the unexpected and unusual. "You look for the other way – the thing nobody else has asked," because otherwise the interview may sound like everyone else's, she says.

Choosing 85 interviews from about 20,000 for "Talk" was difficult, but Stamberg says her goal was to tell the story of the times. So, for instance, she includes a 1974 interview recorded at the height of the feminist revolution with a woman film critic who debated if marriage would ruin an independent woman named Rhoda, the main character on a popular TV show of the same name.

When Stamberg reminisces about the early days of "All Things Considered," she is incredulous at the pace she kept until 1986 when she moved to Weekend Edition and then Morning Edition. A typical day included a 10 a.m. editorial meeting and then about five hours to research, interview, and edit tapes. Editing then and now at NPR is a primitive operation done with razor blade, marker, and sticky tape. "It's like piecing a quilt together," she says. "It was a mad, harried situation."

NPR, says Stamberg, has moved from fledgling to major institution. It has swelled from a staff of 65 in 1971 to about 437 today. The 63 member stations have mushroomed to 468.

There's been enormous audience growth, especially since the Gulf war. "We're doing well," she says. "We've carved out a position for ourselves."

NPR has recently expanded its foreign coverage by adding reporters and opening bureaus. The next step, Stamberg says, is to go global with the network.

"Just as you can sit in a hotel room in Prague and watch CNN, I hope you will be able to sit and hear NPR – like the BBC," she says. "It's not going to happen tomorrow ... but it's part of the plan. We're ready for it."

NPR listenership grew

When asked about NPR's finances, Stamberg knocks on the table. "I keep waiting for the shoe to drop, and it doesn't seem to.... The stations are doing wonderfully," she says.

"A lot of it has to do with our increased audibility – the fact that the listenership is growing, and we're seen as such an institution for dissemination of information, so that attracts contributions." NPR is funded largely by corporate donations and fees from member stations.

She adds that nightly television news coverage, "which borders on the frivolous and doesn't explain the event or give you context," is benefiting NPR.

Radio fills a unique media niche, she says, because "we can take you to a place in sound in a way that TV through its pictures, strangely enough, can't do. TV's so specific that all you see is that fire in San Francisco. You don't see that the rest of the city wasn't burning with the earthquake. It's just that one thing they give you to look at, and there it is, but that's all you know."

Stamberg is now a special correspondent for NPR with no plans to leave. She and 14 colleagues have stuck with the organization since its early days. "They call us 'lifers' there," she laughs. "We've grown up with it."

Public TV's Cable Venture

NEW YORK

PUBLIC television is expanding its reach beyond broadcast TV into cable with the formation of a new informational and cultural network called Horizons TV.

The 24-hour cable channel will tap into the major educational and cultural events offered every day at the nation's leading universities, museums, libraries, and arts centers. It will bring readings, lectures, debates, and symposia into homes, broadening the range of educational services that public television stations provide.

Horizons TV is an initiative of the Public Broadcasting Services (PBS), WGBH Boston, and Thirteen/WNET in New York. It is designed to provide access to thinkers, scientists, authors, artists, and teachers. The new cable service is expected to be launched at the end of 1994, when additional cable channel capacity will begin to come on line. It will be a financially independent, self-sustaining nonprofit enterprise. No government funds will be involved in the service.

– Associated Press

Seen in a Victorian Mirror

Two A.S. Byatt novellas reflect but fail to illuminate a past period

By Merle Rubin

IN "Angels and Insects," A. S. Byatt returns to the Victorian world summoned up with such wizardry in her previous novel, "Possession" (1990), this time in a pair of novellas exploring, among other things, questions of love and marriage.

The first, "Morpho Eugenia," takes its title from a species of butterfly. The hero, William Adamson, is an intelligent and enterprising man of humble birth who has spent 10 years observing and collecting specimens of wildlife in the Amazon jungle. A contemporary of Darwin, he is impressed by the power of Darwin's theory to explain the rich diversity of life he has encountered in his travels. As the story opens, Adamson, lean and leathery from his expedition and the shipwreck he survived on his return, is staying at the gracious country home of the Rev. Harald Alabaster, a white-haired baronet who is something of an amateur naturalist himself. The Alabaster family, as blond-haired and ivory-complexioned as their name suggests, includes the baronet's plump, indolent wife; two hunting-shooting-riding sons, three lovely nubile daughters, and a bevy of smaller children.

The kindly *paterfamilias* offers to help the impecunious Adamson by inviting him to stay on and catalog his collection. Alabaster himself is writing a treatise in which he hopes to demonstrate that the recent discoveries of natural science are not incompatible with the belief in a divinely ordered universe, and he would like to have Adamson on hand as a sounding board for his ideas. Adamson agrees.

Before long, however, the naturalist is totally smitten with the blonde beauty of the eldest daughter, Eugenia. He knows he is beneath her station, yet he feels he "must have her or die," as if his need for her were an instinct stronger and deeper than his rational mind would allow. A reasonable and disciplined man, however, he approaches the object of his ardor in a civilized manner that wins the family's respect and makes this union a real possibility.

As Adamson becomes an accepted member of the household, he also observes its workings, as if it were an anthill or a beehive: the combative, idle brothers like drones; the beautifully adorned ladies like queen bees; and an army of neutered female "workers:" "silently hurrying, black-clad young women, carrying buckets of cinders, buckets of water, boxes of polishing tools, fistfuls of brooms and brushes and carpet beaters.... Some were no more than children, hardly different from the little girls in the nursery, except that the latter were delicately swathed in petticoats, and frills, ... and these were for the most part skinny, with close-fitting, unornamental bodices and whisking dark skirts, wearing formidably starched white caps over their hair."

Adamson is well aware that analogies between insects and humans can be misleading. But he is blessed or cursed with a kind of

BOOKS

ANGELS AND INSECTS: TWO NOVELLAS
By A. S. Byatt
Random House, 339 pp., $21

double vision that leads him to see such correspondences, from the social organization of ants and bees to the mysterious process of change embodied in a caterpillar's metamorphosis. Many remarkable discoveries are in store for him, proving that things are not always what they seem, whether it's the true nature of his love for Eugenia or the nature of the companionship he shares with the plain but intelligent Matty Crompton, an educated woman who, like himself, occupies an anomalous role in the household.

The characters in the second novella, "The Conjugial Angel," ("conjugial" being the special term used by the famous mystic Swedenborg) view life from a very different, but equally "Victorian" perspective. They are a circle of people who hold séances, hoping to talk with souls of the dead. Two are mediums: quiet, virginal Sophie Sheekhy and lively Lilias Papagay, "an intelligent, questioning ... woman ... who, in an earlier age, would have been a theologically minded nun, and in a later one would have had a university training in philosophy or psychology or medicine." These ladies are neither fanatics nor frauds. They are not quite sure themselves what is actually happening when they go into trances or practice automatic writing. Mrs. Papagay, who sorely misses her husband, a sailor lost at sea, values the opportunity to perhaps receive messages from him. But even more, she finds, séances offer her a wonderful way of being involved with *life:* "this traffic with the dead was the best way to know, to observe, to love the living, not as they were politely over teacups, but in their secret selves, their deepest desires and fears."

The séances take place at the home of Captain and Mrs. Jesse: he is a truly courageous sea captain with a heroic record; she is a sister of the Poet Laureate Alfred Tennyson, author of the great poem that most eloquently and poignantly articulated the faith and doubts of an era: "In Memoriam A. H. H."

Emily Tennyson Jesse is the sister who had been engaged to marry her brother's dearest friend, the very same Arthur Henry Hallam whose sudden death at the age of 22 inspired Tennyson's masterpiece, a testament of the grief that haunted the poet for the rest of his life. Tennyson's powerful expression of love, sorrow, faith, doubt, and devotion is something of a burden to Emily. His loss overshadows her own. And her marriage to Captain Jesse nine years after Hallam's death has elicited murmurs of surprise and disapproval.

Byatt's characters – fictional and historical – ponder the nature of love – temporal and eternal – in images and concepts that are authentically Victorian, yet not that far removed from the hopes and fears still felt by their descendants a century later. Her lushly descriptive prose has a Pre-Raphaelite vividness of color and detail. She manages, by and large, to avoid the fallacy of attributing present-day ideas to people of the past. Indeed, if she errs, it is more in the opposite direction of taking the past too literally: of failing to delve below the surface to find out more about the Victorians than the Victorians already knew about themselves.

"Angels and Insects" is an exquisitely executed, intelligent, and diverting diptych that lacks only the final touch of inspiration to transform it from reflective mirror into illuminating lamp.

■ *Merle Rubin regularly reviews literature and contemporary fiction for the Monitor.*

Bruin Spells Ruin For Softball Batters

WHILE pitching is of central importance in baseball, it sometimes seems the be-all and end-all of women's softball. Players who master the windmilling, fast-pitch delivery often enjoy uncommon success. Take Lisa Fernandez, for example. Heading into last weekend's college playoffs, she had a gaudy two-year record of 56-1. Roger Clemens, perhaps baseball's premier pitcher, was 36-21 during this same period.

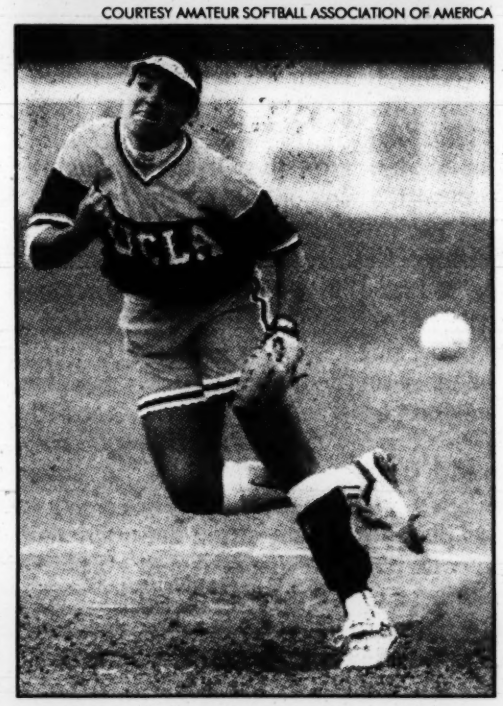
Fernandez could emerge as the ace of the United States team when women's softball debuts in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics. Right now, the priority is to help the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) secure another national championship.

The Bruins dominate softball the way the UCLA men's basketball team once held forth on the hardwood. By defeating Cal State-Fullerton two games to none in a best-of-three regional series (Fernandez pitched both games), seven-time national champion UCLA advances into the eight-team Women's College World Series, to be played in Oklahoma City, Okla., May 27-31.

SPORTS NOTEBOOK

Fernandez, a senior, has tossed 24 shutouts this year alone, including four no-hitters. She also has a nation-leading .506 batting average, and plays an almost errorless third base when not pitching.

COURTESY AMATEUR SOFTBALL ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA



FERNANDEZ: *UCLA pitcher is talented hitter, too, with a nation-leading .506 average.*

Lisa and other top women hurlers deliver the ball in the 65 to 70 miles-per-hour range, which seems even faster because the pitching rubber is just 43 feet away from home plate (in men's softball the distance is 46 feet, and in baseball it's 60 ft., 6 in.). Kathy Arendsen, a softball Hall of Famer, once struck out Reggie Jackson during a made-for-TV showdown, and it wasn't just the speed of Arendsen's pitches that handcuffed the Yankee slugger, but her variety of pitches. (Fernandez also has a full repertoire of drops, curves, and risers.)

In international play, pitching duels can be frequent. To help break scoreless ties, a runner is placed at second base beginning with the third extra inning of a seven-inning game.

The college rules make no such provision, but the women introduced a new, livelier, optic-yellow ball this season in hopes of creating more offensive fireworks. The college championship game will be broadcast via tape delay by ESPN June 7 at 1 p.m. Eastern time.

Indy drivers slow down a smidgeon

Qualifying and practice speeds at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway are down slightly this year from last year's record-high level. The "leadfoots," rest assured, would love it if they were still pushing 230 miles per hour. The speedometer readings are a few m.p.h. slower only because a rumble strip now awaits drivers once tempted to cut corners by the track's wide aprons.

Commenting on what the "one groove" track might mean come race day, May 30, Arie Luyendyk, who earned the pole position with a top qualifying speed of nearly 224 m.p.h., said, "All the drivers' patience will be tested ... because you can be stuck behind a guy forever. It's going to be pretty hard to pass."

Keeping speeds relatively safe has traditionally been a challenge at Indy, where the 2 1/2-mile oval's basic configuration has never changed. Today the track must accommodate cars traveling nearly three times faster than Ray Harroun's winning entry in the inaugural 1911 race, which averaged 74.6 m.p.h.

– Ross Atkin

Glass's Patented Style Serves 'Orphée' Well

R. FELDMAN/AMERICAN REPERTORY THEATRE

THE UNDERWORLD: *Orphée's wife Eurydice, in limbo, (center, played by Elizabeth Futral) waits to hear her fate from the tribunal (led by John Kuether).*

By Karen Campbell
Special to The Christian Science Monitor

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

THE legend of Orpheus, son of the poetic muse Calliope and the god of music Apollo, is one of the most enduring in Greek mythology. A brilliant musician whose music so charmed Hades that he was allowed to lead his dead wife, Eurydice, back into the land of the living, Orpheus represents the divine power of art.

The fact that Orpheus looked back to make sure Eurydice was following, thereby disregarding Hades' provision and banishing his wife back to the underworld, makes him all the more human and intriguing. Orpheus has come to be viewed as a tragic figure who personifies the artist as a link between the corporeal and spiritual worlds. His tale has inspired countless works of art.

Philip Glass is the latest composer to dramatize the Orpheus legend with a new opera that debuted last week at the American Repertory Theatre (ART). "Orphée" is based on Jean Cocteau's retelling of the myth in his 1949 film of the same name. The film is an allegory on the life of the misunderstood artist, a poet who derives inspiration from a fascination with death.

Glass's opera uses the Cocteau screenplay for a scenario, and therein lie both the strengths and weaknesses of this new work. As adapted by Glass and edited by ART Artistic Director Robert Brustein, the libretto is accessible, clever, and entertaining. But it is also convoluted and so elliptical that the audience is never made to fully understand or appreciate the artistic or charismatic power of the main character.

Director Francesca Zambello's staging is both stylish and naturalistic, allowing for contrasts between Orphée's routine life at home and in the Paris cafés, and his visits to the netherworld to search for his poetic muse. Yet Orphée's passion for art, his abiding love for his wife, and his fatal attraction to the Princess (a seductive agent of Death) are more alluded to than portrayed. We never relate to him, nor do we really care. This "Orphée" seems a bit hollow at the core.

Glass has written his most accessible music in years for "Orphée." As expected, recitatives and arias are scrapped in favor of sung dialogue (performed in French with English supertitles.) Much of the dialogue is pragmatic rather than poetic, but there are some longer, more melodic sections that soar with an unexpected lyricism. Beneath it all churns Glass's trademark propulsive rhythms – quickly alternating chords, a constant run of arpeggios, small motivic figures tenaciously repeated.

MUSIC

However, these characteristic musical formulas are put to the service of a rather broad stylistic palette. The opening café scene percolates with the energy and syncopations of ragtime. There is a bit of ersatz Americana, a hint of boogie-woogie, some polytonal, circus-y *oom pah pahs*.

The 12-piece orchestra, led by a rock-solid Martin Goldray, includes synthesizer and percussion (such as chimes, maracas, and woodblocks) that add color. Musical sections are short, varied, and with an overall arching structure that is something of a departure for a Glass opera. What the music lacks in the pristine rigor of earlier works, such as "Einstein on the Beach," it makes up for in variety.

The cast for "Orphée" is first rate, though all were understated dramatically. The press opening on May 19 featured Eugene Perry in the title role (to alternate with Leroy Villanueva). Though the character is a bit of a cipher, Perry's dramatic skills kept Orphée believable. Vocally, Perry's rich baritone was articulate and expressive. Elizabeth Futral was an affecting Eurydice.

The most challenging role vocally belonged to Wendy Hill as the Princess. Though she stalked the earthly realms with icy calculation, her voice was capable of throbbing with warmth and passion. She navigated the most chromatic writing of the opera with assurance, though there was a bit of shrillness in her tone.

The most moving role was that of Heurtebise, the Princess's chauffeur and reluctant assistant, beautifully portrayed by Richard Fracker with his splendidly expressive tenor. The excellent supporting cast included Paul Kirby as Cégeste and Janice Felty as Aglaonice.

The overall look of "Orphée" is a stunning surrealistic tableau of cream and black by designer Robert Israel.

■ *"Orphée" ends July 10.*

Following US Lead, European Cinema Reaches to Religion

By David Sterritt
Staff writer of The Christian Science Monitor

CANNES, FRANCE

IN a modest but significant trend, some American filmmakers have been paying increased attention to religious matters lately.

Examples range from a high-profile epic like "Malcolm X" to an offbeat drama like "The Rapture." While they vary widely in their ideas and attitudes, these films give the lie to alarmist critics who claim that American film has been taken over by crass materialism.

A number of movies at this year's Cannes Film Festival indicate that the same tendency is affecting European cinema. A good example is **Faraway, So Close!** by Wim Wenders, a major German director.

Made as a sequel to his well-liked "Wings of Desire," it again tells the story of an angel who falls to Earth and becomes an ordinary man – not because he rejects his angelic mission, which is to carry the message of love and hope to unhappy people, but because his affection for humanity becomes so great that he can't help embracing it all the way. He takes up his new life with enthusiasm, determined to do good deeds and leave the world a more decent and caring place than he found it.

As in his earlier film on this subject, Mr. Wenders is more interested in spinning a gossamer fantasy than exploring profound issues; still, he seems sincere in his acknowledgment of a spiritual dimension in human experience, and in his hostility toward images and behaviors that chain people to the lower aspects of their existence.

And once more he has assembled a marvelous cast to enact his story. It includes Otto Sander as the angel who becomes a man; Peter Falk and Willem Dafoe as angels with very different personalities; Bruno Ganz as another of their colleagues; Nastassja Kinski as an angel who remains angelic; and rock star Lou Reed as himself.

Despite such an interesting subject and so many talented collaborators, however, it must be said that Wenders has made regrettably little of the opportunities offered by this film.

After a glorious beginning, in which his camera evokes a sublime sense of transcendence and wonder, he steers the movie into more than two hours of unfocused drama, limp comedy, and pointless adventure scenes, spiced with homilies as philosophically rich as the average fortune-cookie slogan. Wenders's impulses are laudable, and the best moments of his new picture are magnificent. But he has not carried the "Wings of Desire" saga to a lofty new stage of development.

FILM

More brilliant, if less commercially oriented, is **Magnificat**, a new Italian film by Pupi Avati, whose recent comedy-drama "The Story of Boys and Girls" found much favor with American audiences. Set at the end of the 10th century, "Magnificat" has little in the way of a story but portrays a few days in the life of a small village dominated by the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church and the power of a feudal lord who controls everyone and everything in sight.

The film's most extraordinary quality is its ability to evoke the amazing contradictions of medieval life, in which a single set of beliefs and social rules is the source of both the grim horrors perpetrated by the local executioner and the consoling beauties offered by church rituals and disciplines.

Weaving his tapestry of daily life with impressive simplicity and economy, Mr. Avati offers an utterly convincing depiction of a bygone time while subtly suggesting that neither its brutal superstitions nor its capacities for childlike faith and joy have been entirely left behind by our own era.

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The Home Forum.

The Crack of the Bat on the Big Screen

EVER since I was a kid, every spectator sport struck me as a colossal waste of time. Mind you, I liked movies about sports; Hollywood had a way of making tiresome activity look engaging and meaningful. But the reality of thousands of people filing into a football stadium to watch their heroes line up on either side of a ball and then fall on it seemed pretty silly.

I could see that basketball was exciting, if you happened to be there, but in the end it, too, seemed a waste of time, money, and ingenuity. And then baseball was so slow. When I watched the World Series on TV with my husband (for the sake of fellowship), I felt that at least it wasn't a violent sport, but neither did it seem very interesting. Grown men stand idly in a sunny field and throw a small ball, or hit it with a stick, or catch it as it comes down. No matter how much I had loved "The Pride of the Yankees" (1942), "The Natural" (1984), or "Field of Dreams" (1989), baseball seemed senseless.

Until last summer.

Something happened one hot night last summer as I sat in the bleachers of Mile High Stadium for a minor-league game. I sat between my husband and a close buddy, and the two guys patiently answered every one of my 5,000 questions about the rules and the strategy of baseball.

It was an exciting game, especially since our team won. But better than that, it was deeply restful, like going on vacation. I'd been to all kinds of games over the years, but this was the first time I ever got the point. All those athletes, so highly skilled, graceful, lively, earnest. The clean lines of the field and the cool look of the grass made up a different world. The terrible music sounded wonderful. The thrill of sharing victory with strangers was the thrill of community – however momentary.

All the terrific movies ever made about baseball suddenly made new sense, though none of them really tried to capture the real event as experienced from the stands. As film critic Robert Denerstein pointed out in Denver's Rocky Mountain News, baseball movies don't have much to do with baseball. But, I would add, they are always about what baseball means – its significance as a cultural icon, as a symbol of "all that was best in America," as one character put it in "Field of Dreams."

These films are often nostalgic and idealized views of baseball. "Man, I did love this game," says Shoeless Joe Jackson in "Field of Dreams." "I would have played for nothing." And I understand that, too. Because however expensive major-league baseball has become, however exasperating the politics and the economics, there is something indefinably American and wholesome still left in the game.

Nine men stand alone, individuals, spaced far apart. Yet they must operate as a single unit too. The myth of rugged individualism built so solidly into the socio-political persona of the nation retains within itself the community that is able to act as a unit when necessary. And so the heroes of many baseball films must learn self-discipline and concentration, cooperation and fraternal care, building a team out of diverse (often antagonistic) personalities. "Major League" (1989), "A League of Their Own" (1992), "The Natural," "Mr. Baseball" (1992), and even the new kid-flick "Sandlot" build super teams out of fractured players.

In fact, "Sandlot," a modest, overwritten little picture, takes up several of the prominent themes of baseball movies. The protagonist, Scotty, is a lonely little boy who makes friends with the neighborhood kids when he learns to throw and to catch a baseball. His hero, Benjamin Franklin Rodriguez, the leader of the group, lives for baseball. Rodriguez will face "the beast," a large, angry guard dog who lives behind the sandlot where the boys play everyday – just as the knights of yore had to face monsters and dragons.

The hero's journey – a valorous quest undertaken for the good of others or for the hero's own evolution as a warrior – is likewise an important recurring theme in baseball movies. There are tests of strength, courage, endurance, and sometimes tests of good sense cropping up in films like "Pride of the Yankees," "The Natural," "Mr. Baseball," "Major League," and "Field of Dreams."

Baseball is a liberator for the young boy with no friends in "Sandlot," as it is for Lou Gehrig in "Pride of the Yankees" and Babe Ruth in last year's "Babe." And in "Sandlot," baseball is the occasion for reconciliation between the boy and his stepfather. Fathers and sons figure heavily in baseball movies. A father-son reconciliation is the prime impetus for the hero's journey of "Field of Dreams." In "Fear Strikes Out" (1957) and "Babe," hard-hearted fathers drive their sons away – into mental illness in "Fear Strikes Out" and into fame, fortune, and poor self-esteem in "Babe." The father's benign presence is felt at the beginning and at the end of "The Natural," my favorite of all baseball films.

"The Natural" is an updated Arthurian tale, a hero's quest picture that follows the protagonist from boyhood on a farm where his loving father instructs him in the finer points of the game (like an ancient knight instructed by his lord). When the father dies suddenly, the boy carves a bat from a tree struck by lightening on the same day. The bat, like Excalibur or any other magic weapon, has special significance. The team the hero plays for is called "the New York Knights." And along the path, the hero meets an archetypal "dark lady" who halts him in his quest temporarily. Later, another lady of darkness traps him in a destructive relationship, from which the "lady of light" will help him free himself in the end. The trials will be stern and dangerous. He will fail some of them. Yet, though he is slow to see the traps laid for him, he cannot be seduced by evil once he recognizes it.

The hero, Roy Hobbs (Robert Redford), speaks with such passion of his love for baseball, just as Shoeless Joe, Doc Graham, and Terrence Mann do in "Field of Dreams." The passion for the sport is felt in most of the films, but in different degrees. "Bull Durham" (1988), a depressingly sexist comedy about minor-league ball, offered a hero who never rises out of his bad fortune.

Yet he, too, carries his passion for the game around like a talisman.

A character in "Mr. Baseball" keeps telling his stern Japanese coach, "It's a game. It's supposed to be fun." This awkward picture is really about culture clash. A New York Yankee is sold to a Japanese ball club when he hits a slump: He has actually sunk into laziness and apathy. In the end, what he has to learn is team spirit, cooperation, and respect for the game.

There are plenty of locker-room sequences in oddball movies like "Major League" and "Mr. Baseball." Even "The Natural" follows the guys into their private haven in victory and defeat. Camaraderie is a big part of most sports pictures, and in baseball movies, camaraderie is always one of the most important aspects of the film. What we see is male bonding. The one exception is "A League of Their Own."

"A League of Their Own" may not be historically accurate, but it has its charms. The story follows the women's baseball teams of the 1940s when the men were off to war and public morale needed a boost. Baseball, as the super-American sport, had to be kept alive by order of the president.

The themes are a little different – there's no hero's journey, no real problems with parents to be exorcised. But self-esteem is an issue, as is team spirit, and sheer love of the sport. The conflict lies primarily between two sisters, though the chauvinism of the society is one giant the women have to keep striking out.

Several baseball films have veered into the darker recesses of human consciousness – "Fear Strikes Out," "Babe," and "Bang the Drum Slowly" (1973), for example. The last film was a naturalistic tale about a dying catcher and his faithful friend and pitcher. Once the team learns of the catcher's imminent death, they rally around him and give him a great last season. Surprisingly

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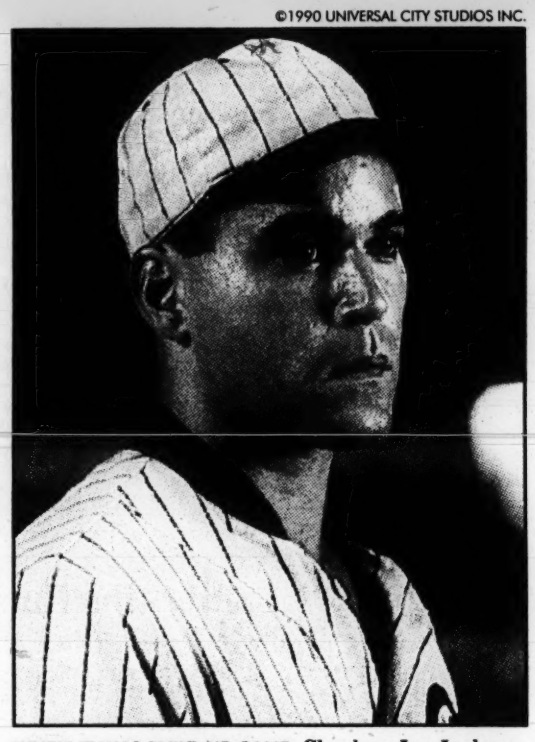

WHEN IT WAS BUILT, HE CAME: *Shoeless Joe Jackson, played by Ray Liotta, appeared on the baseball diamond built in an Iowa cornfield in 'Field of Dreams.'*

DEAN WILLIAMS/©1992 UNIVERSAL CITY STUDIOS INC.

'THE BABE': *John Goodman played baseball legend Babe Ruth in the 1992 film.*

JOHN BRAMLEY/20TH CENTURY FOX

DID HE HIT A HOMER?: *Ham and Scotty, two characters in 'Sandlot,' watch a ball Scotty has just batted.*

unsentimental, given the subject matter, "Bang the Drum" featured Robert De Niro as the stunningly sweet, if somewhat dim, catcher.

Perhaps the most uplifting baseball film remains "Field of Dreams." Working out in his cornfield one evening, Ray Kinsella hears a voice telling him, "If you build it, he will come." Ray eventually figures out the voice is requesting a baseball field. But this is no ordinary field. Here the lost Chicago "Black Sox," the men who had thrown the World Series 60 years earlier, show up to play ball. The baseball field and Ray's subsequent hero's journey represent clear symbols for something rather transcendent. Ray makes a place in his life, his daily economic well-being for something good intuitively discerned. Having made that place for good, good does indeed arrive. And baseball is the symbol for "all that was good in America and could be again."

I understand all these films differently now – now that I love baseball, too. I never played it. I never will. But from the bleachers at Mile High Stadium all this season, I will watch "the boys of summer" throw, hit, catch, and run, remembering how different the real thing is from the Hollywood version. Yet I will also remember that the best of those films really did enrich baseball for me and many others – that their metaphors for heroic action and grace carry well into real life.

Marilynne S. Mason

Peacemakers – The Children of God

NO matter how dangerous a situation we may find ourselves in, we can rely on the power of God to guide and protect us. Prayer shows us how to recognize God's presence with us, no matter what we face. Violence is an imposition against mankind, and with God's help we can rise in rebellion against it. Regardless of what form evil seems to take—aggression, violence, terrorism, verbal pollution, graffiti—it is never true of God or His spiritual creation, man.

In his Sermon on the Mount, found in the Bible in Matthew's Gospel, Christ Jesus declares, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Jesus is the master Christian and our Way-shower, and we can follow and benefit from his teachings and example. We are peacemakers to the degree that we prayerfully rebel against violence. Violence has no place in God's creation, the only reality. And striving to destroy violence by living as peacemakers even in the small things of our daily lives benefits others, as well as ourselves. As Mary Baker Eddy, the Founder of the Christian Science Church, points out in her book *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures:* "The destruction of the claims of mortal mind through Science, by which man can escape from sin and mortality, blesses the whole human family."

The Christian Science Monitor's Religious Article

One vacation day, my family and I saw how effective prayer can be in defusing a dangerous and potentially violent situation. We had decided to go into the city for a day of fun. When changing subway trains, we needed to pass through a tunnel that led to the platform for our train. In the tunnel there was a small group of young men, two of whom were arguing. They were very loud and threatening—and appeared on the brink of a fight.

The people wishing to go to the platform to wait for the train passed the spot hesitantly because of the boys' erratic behavior. As I walked past one of the boys who was arguing, I saw that he had a knife in his hand. It was only a few inches away from me. Instead of feeling frightened, however, I felt God's, divine Love's, ever-presence and His care for each one of us.

Though the boys continued to threaten each other, I kept still and prayerfully affirmed that God's law was present and in operation. There could therefore be no other power. As I prayed during those moments, I remembered this passage from *Science and Health:* "Mankind must learn that evil is not power. Its so-called despotism is but a phase of nothingness. Christian Science despoils the kingdom of evil, and pre-eminently promotes affection and virtue in families and therefore in the community."

It appeared we were all trapped by this situation. As I continued to pray, however, the group began breaking up and some of them were starting to leave the station. We asked the attendant on duty to notify the police, but in a short time the group had totally dispersed with everyone unharmed. We returned to the platform. The train arrived and we all got on.

This experience helped reaffirm my conviction that I can turn to God and His law of immutable good when faced with *any* difficulty. And I saw once again how practical is the promise of Christ Jesus' words as recorded in John's Gospel: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." The truth of God's protecting care for His loved, spiritual creation, when clearly seen, meets immediate needs. It can deliver mankind from violence and hatred. Relying on God in prayer makes us peacemakers and enables us all to "be called the children of God."

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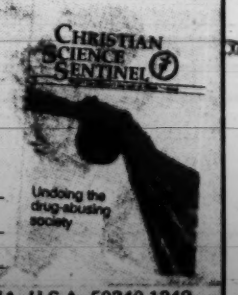

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"First the blade, then the ear, then the full grain in the ear."

EDITORIALS

Wielding the Tools

IT must frustrate President Clinton to know that he has the basic political tools and skills to get the job done but is having such a difficult time bringing them to bear. It certainly is frustrating to watch.

In his own office operation, his staff has mishandled the replacement of workers at the White House travel office, apparently unconcerned about the potential for conflict of interest in naming as an interim replacement a travel agency that employed one of Mr. Clinton's cousins. The White House has since reversed that decision. Meanwhile, in Los Angeles to generate support for his economic package, Air Force One sat on the Tarmac delaying flights while the president got a $175 haircut.

On Capitol Hill he is being challenged by moderates in his own party on his budget package, a cornerstone of his domestic program. The United States House takes up the tax portion of the package on Thursday. Then it moves to the Senate, where it is facing opposition from moderate and conservative Democrats.

Abroad, he has decided to back down from a strong proposal to help end the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Unable to convince Western allies to support his proposal, he decided to fall in line with them in a plan announced during the weekend that in effect grants Bosnian Serbs the territory they have gained through "ethnic cleansing."

One can take hope in the ability of this president to bounce back from adversity and learn from past mistakes. But some of the best examples of both stem from his days as the governor of Arkansas, where his defeat after a first term taught him lessons that ultimately helped propel him through four additional, generally successful terms. As head of the world's remaining superpower, however, he hasn't that luxury of trying again after a one-term hiatus.

Yet it is still much too early to write this presidency off. Indeed, the nation cannot afford to do so, especially during this period of fundamental change at home and around the world.

For Clinton, the need is to regain his philosophical and political bearings, articulate them, and bring his administration's actions into line with them. In some respects he has tried to do this, most recently in speeches that sounded moral, even religious themes. They call to mind President Carter's "malaise" speech. Yet Carter's case showed that the problem he identified arguably lay less with the electorate and more with him. Either way, Clinton cannot afford a similar mistake.

His political problems in Congress and in the polls stem from his apparent shift away from the centrist base that carried him to office. His surest course is to return to that base. Building on it would do more for him that a June full of commencement speeches.

Americans want this president to succeed. And as Bush media adviser Sig Rogich has said, "Bill Clinton has a lot of time to run this around."

We hope he does. It would be unfortunate if lost opportunities left the $175 haircut at the end of the runway to become Clinton's equivalent of Carter's "killer rabbit."

'Culture' Is No Excuse

THE acquittal of Rodney Peairs, a 31-year-old in Baton Rouge, La., who shot and killed a Japanese exchange student he thought might be an intruder, has shocked and angered the Japanese. Because private guns are outlawed in Japan, the story plays as a clash of two cultures.

The Japanese reaction to the acquittal was summed up by a huge front-page headline Sunday in Tokyo's largest daily newspaper, which read simply, "Unbelievable." The verdict adds to the Japanese view of America as sanctioning an unstable, violent, and lawless culture.

In Baton Rouge, many local citizens reportedly feel sympathy with Mr. Peairs. The shooting is regretted. But since the mistake was made in the act of defending the home, a cherished right in America, it is not being condemned.

The episode itself was both tragic and stupid. The exchange student, Masaichi Hattori, 16, wearing a white tuxedo and carrying a camera, had been looking for directions to a Halloween party when he was shot with a .44 Magnum outside Peairs's house. Peairs testified that Hattori did not stop when asked to "freeze," and that he had thought Hattori's camera was a gun, so he opened fire.

One wants to ask many questions: Why did Peairs not wait longer or fire a warning shot? Does this set a precedent for vigilante justice and killing people so long as they are on private property and look "different"?

But in the larger sense, Americans ought not resort to the argument that Japanese anger can be dismissed as a matter of "cultural difference." To blame this case on "American culture" or the "American system," or to simply say that this is the price one pays for individual liberty, is not to challenge problems in the culture that allow such a tragic event to take place.

'Social Clause' and NAFTA: Protectionists' Stalking Horse

By Abraham Katz

ORGANIZED labor is actively campaigning to include enforcement of "internationally recognized labor rights" in a side agreement that President Clinton wants before submitting the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) to Congress.

At labor's behest the United Nations Association's Economic Policy Council (EPC) has called for a commitment to observe such rights in NAFTA and to provide trade mechanisms to enforce this pledge.

This idea of labor's rights, long known as the "social clause," also is being pushed in other international forums, and it has been picked up by some environmental groups in connection with both NAFTA and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

The "social clause" originated in Bismarck's time. The idea has surfaced periodically since, but has never been accepted: It is correctly perceived as protectionist. When the AFL-CIO got the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions to put the case for the "social clause" to the tripartite International Labor Organization (ILO) in Geneva – since 1919 the only body authorized to promulgate "internationally recognized labor rights" – they were rebuffed.

In the ILO, sunshine, not sanctions, is the discipline of choice. The same principle should apply to labor standards under NAFTA.

The AFL-CIO has succeeded in getting Congress to refer to such rights as part of certain unilateral US trade laws, such as the Generalized System of Preferences. However, when Congress included the notion among US objectives for the current GATT negotiations, the US was rebuffed by its trading partners.

The ILO rejects the social clause because it would undercut its very foundation. ILO conventions are voluntary, and the organization's supervisory machinery relies on "sunshine," the weight of international opinion, rather than on trade sanctions, to ensure compliance with the conventions.

An attempt by the European Community to force the social clause on former European colonies through the Lomé Convention also failed, as governments perceived the implicit protectionist threat.

Protectionism aside, the social clause could only work in NAFTA or anywhere else if all parties agree on a definition of "internationally recognized labor rights" and concede their sovereignty in this respect to an international tribunal.

The phrase is understood by most governments to refer to the 171 ILO conventions, which are based on European experience. Mexico has ratified 73 of these. The US has ratified only one.

Alternatively, a definition might be negotiated among the NAFTA countries. However, given the differences between US, Mexican, and Canadian systems, it would be quite a feat to reduce these rights to legally enforceable language.

Candidates mentioned for enforcing these rights include a trilateral labor commission, in the case of NAFTA; or, since the ILO and GATT have turned down the honor when disputes arise over multilateral trade, perhaps the World Court. Would the US Congress and Supreme Court give up their jurisdiction over US labor law and practice to any of these bodies? Even if they did, using trade sanctions to enforce labor standards would generate endless litigation, creating the very uncertainty for business that NAFTA was intended to eliminate.

The AFL-CIO knows that Canada and Mexico will not accept a social clause; nor do they really expect the US government to do so. Their harping on this idea thus leads one to suspect that their campaign serves other purposes: to kill NAFTA and/or to bring pressure to change US labor law to restore some of the power unions have lost in the market and at the union ballot box.

The AFL-CIO agreed with the US Council, which represents American business, in the context of the President's Committee on the ILO not to try to change US labor law and practice through ratification of ILO conventions.

Now they propose to have "internationally recognized labor rights" apply and be enforced for all three countries, including the US. Could this be related to the fact that some in the US labor movement are currently touting the German model of industrial relations?

If they are serious about promoting internationally recognized labor rights through NAFTA, the unions should take their cue from the ILO.

Its methods include technical assistance, consultation on improving standards, and procedures whereby complaints can be fully aired in a tripartite forum.

The ILO's techniques of assistance and consultation already are being applied through both public- and private-sector cooperation to improve labor and environmental standards and conditions in NAFTA countries. Under the labor side agreement, the three governments should use these techniques to raise standards and improve their enforcement.

Trilateral labor and environment commissions set up by the side agreements should encourage the private sector to continue the exchange of best practices in the labor and environmental fields, as the US Council has been doing in cooperation with Mexican industry.

This program has so far resulted in more than three dozen joint training events, which probably would not have occurred without NAFTA. In the ILO, sunshine, and not sanctions is the discipline of choice. The same principle should apply to labor standards under NAFTA.

■ *Abraham Katz is president of the US Council for International Business, a New York-based business association that is the US affiliate of the International Organization of Employers.*

OPINION / ESSAYS

Germany and other European nations must shoulder larger defense loads

US Should Pull More Troops From Europe

By Doug Bandow

ON his recent visit to the Pentagon, President Clinton promised that there would be no further budget cuts on top of those already projected, despite America's economic slowdown. The cold war may be over, but the administration, which forecasts a deficit of $240 billion in 1998, nevertheless plans on spending more than $252 million on the military the same year – comparable in real terms to outlays during the 1950s, when Moscow posed a real threat.

Very different has been the response of Germany to its recession. German Chancellor Helmut Kohl has announced that his nation will reduce its force by 40 percent over the next three years, from 500,000 to 300,000.

"It cannot be stressed often enough," he told an audience that included United States Defense Secretary Les Aspin, that "a substantial (US) military presence should remain in Europe in order to meet the alliance's tasks now and in the future." American voters – now facing demands by their president to pay higher taxes – "may not understand this," Mr. Kohl allowed, "but the essence of politics is to carry out things the electorate might not immediately understand."

Yes, some things are difficult to understand. Like why Germany should feel free to dismantle its military and redirect defense funds domestically, while the US is continuing to maintain forces to protect Germany against what its leaders believe to be nonexistent threats. Washington initially bore a disproportionate defense load during the cold war for a reason: A devastated Europe was threatened by an aggressive, dangerous Soviet Union. But the NATO commitment was never conceived of as permanent. Dwight Eisenhower, among others, warned that a long-term American presence would discourage European defense efforts.

What is there to defend against today? Moscow's military remains potent, but hardly capable of sweeping through the now-independent Eastern European states, Germany, and on to the Atlantic. Indeed, Russian military spending has been falling to about $53 billion, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies in London – little more than that of Great Britain. Even should Yeltsin fall to a militarist coup, his successors would be lucky to hold their nation together, and we would have plenty of time to match any renewed military build-up by Moscow.

Moscow's military remains potent, but hardly capable of sweeping through the now-independent Eastern European states, Germany, and on to the Atlantic.

Moreover, Europe is capable of meeting any potential future Russian threat. There is something almost comical about states whose combined population and GNP exceeds that of the US, let alone of Russia, demanding a permanent US defense shield. American military spending today, some $290 billion, is seven times that of Britain, eight times that of France, and nine times that of Germany. European taxpayers, whose leaders have already cut military outlays by more than has Washington, simply want someone else, namely the US, to pay their defense bills. Indeed, less than half of Germans surveyed today even believe they need a military. If they don't think one is necessary, we surely needn't provide them one.

Of course, the real reason some officials here and abroad want Washington to preserve its European military presence is to monitor Germany. Yet a country that is planning to slash its military by 40 percent seems an unlikely aggressor against nuclear-armed Britain, France, or Russia.

There remains the desire to make troops available to help resolve such conflicts as in the Balkans. But Europe maintains sufficient forces to act. It is presumptuous of foreign officials to expect America to step in where they refuse to act; equally arrogant are US policymakers who consider putting their own citizens at risk in conflicts with so little at stake for America.

Yet if this were not reason enough to bring home and demobilize excess US forces, there is also the budgetary concern cited by Kohl. Despite the end of the cold war, US defense outlays this year are barely $8 billion less than in 1992. Having productive young men sit in tanks in Germany's Fulda Gap is a luxury that we can afford no longer. As London's Financial Times recently editorialized: "Is there a case for economically battered Britain to outspend its richer European neighbours?" No, it answered. We should ask the same question regarding the economically battered US.

Military retrenchment does not mean isolation: The US would still possess the world's most powerful military, productive economy, dominant culture, and attractive political philosophy.

Washington simply need no longer garrison the globe, allowing its supposed allies to play it for a sucker.

■ *Doug Bandow is a senior fellow at the Cato Institute and former aide to President Reagan.*

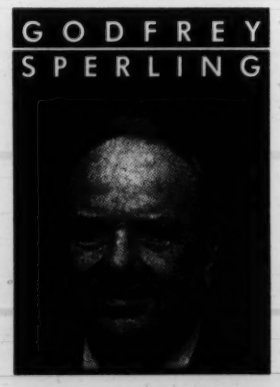
Can Clinton Give Voters Less and Make It Seem More?

OVER the years, on numerous occasions, I have left Washington for a visit to the hinterlands in search of what Americans are thinking. I've usually been rewarded with a rather precise idea of what John and Jane Doe had on their minds. But not this time. If I were to describe the public mood today the only word I could find would be "enigmatic."

Admittedly, my stay in the Mountain Southwest was a little less than two weeks. But there was time for enough conversing and listening in on other conversations (via radio talk shows), plus reading what newspaper editorials and letter writers had to say, for me to reach this firm conclusion: There's confusion out there, my friends. There's one thing that people seem to be agreed upon. Everyone seems to want it. The other day I was looking at an old Edward G. Robinson movie on TV. Robinson, playing his famous gangster-type role, was asked what he wanted out of life. "I want *more*," he said. "That's it. I want *more*."

No doubt about it, most people today do, indeed, want "more." And they seem to feel that it is government's responsibility to give it to them. Not everyone, but a lot of people, particularly those who voted for the president.

After all, President Clinton promised them more. On his recent "campaigning" trip to California, he pushed what he called his "investment" programs and called for more money to be spent for business tax incentives, worker dislocation assistance, job training, and other of his initiatives aimed at lifting the economy. But what is puzzling about so many Americans these days is that, along with the "goodies" they are demanding and have been promised by Mr. Clinton, they also want their taxes untouched or lowered and the deficit wiped out. That's a mighty difficult if not impossible order. But Clinton promised all that, too, or at least rapid progress in that direction.



I also heard some moaning from people I suspected either voted for Clinton or Perot and abandoned a George Bush they voted for in 1988. They were upset Clinton had decided to increase and not decrease taxes on middle-income people. Clinton spoke to them, too, in California, when he said: "Give me four more years to deliver" on this tax-cut pledge.

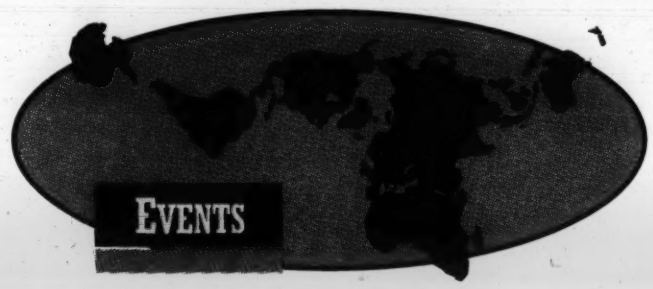
A barber in Flagstaff, Ariz., put it this way when volunteering his view of the president and how he was doing: "It's just the same old politics," he said, wasting no more words on the subject.

When I came home I was greeted by an editorial that I found about as puzzling as the people I had just been listening to. In urging the Democrats in Congress to rally behind the president's programs, New York Times pundits conceded that middle-class constituents who helped elect Clinton were "justified" in complaining that he got their votes "because he vowed to lower their taxes, cut wasteful federal spending, and reduce the oversized deficit." The editorial then adds: "What Mr. Clinton now offers them instead is a hundred-billion-dollar tax hike, minimally reduced federal spending, and a deficit barely below George Bush's levels. These are legitimate concerns," this assessment continues, but goes on to take the position that Clinton's overall package, particularly health-care reform, is beneficial and needed; therefore, it is entitled to full Democratic support and passage.

What puzzled me here was this: How can one expect Democrats in Congress to buy this argument? How can they go back to their constituents next year and explain how they had to increase taxes when they had promised most of them tax reductions? Maybe the liberal Democrats from Northern big cities can sell this approach. But conservative and moderate Democrats, especially those from the South, might have difficulty surviving if they have to justify such a spend-and-tax package.

What I have finally concluded is that the reason people are so puzzled is that Clinton has gotten them all confused. Part of this comes from a very imaginative and energetic fellow who, as he did in his first term as Arkansas governor, tends to come up with too many ideas and too many proposals and legislative initiatives. I think he *really* wants to do all these things. But he out-promises the political realities. The Arkansas voters threw him out for that reason, then elected him later when he publicly recanted.

The nation can't afford such a learning process on his part. It's time for him to refocus and clarify the picture for the American people.



BOSNIA PEACE PLAN IMPERILED

A day after Muslims rejected a Western proposal for safe havens, Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic yesterday opposed posting foreign troops on Serb territory to monitor the plan. The Yugoslav news agency Tanjug quoted Mr. Karadzic as saying the Serbs would not accept an outside international military force because it would violate the sovereignty of the self-proclaimed Bosnian Serb state. He had supported the plan Sunday. Bosnia's Muslim president, Alija Izetbegovic, rejected the peace formula Sunday, calling it an attempt to herd his people into "reservations". The reaction from Mr. Izetbegovic and Karadzic could hold up the plan announced in Washington on Saturday by the United States, Russia, Britain, France, and Spain.

US Supreme Court

In a series of decisions yesterday the court:

■ Refused to block a retrial of lawyer E. Robert Wallach, accused of taking payoffs from Wedtech Corporation to lobby his friend, former Attorney General Edwin Meese. The court, without comment, rejected Mr. Wallach's arguments that prosecutors knowingly allowed a witness to lie during his first trial, and that they failed to prove he defrauded Wedtech.

■ Refused to stop an appellate court's investigation of John Demjanjuk's extradition to Israel, where he has been sentenced to death as Nazi death-camp guard "Ivan the Terrible." The justices, without comment, turned down the appeals of two former US Nazi hunters who say the appellate court is overstepping its authority.

■ Let stand a ruling that could force the Virginia Military Institute to admit women or give up its state financial support. The court, without a recorded dissent, rejected the military college's argument that its male-only policy is constitutional because it promotes educational diversity.

VMI and The Citadel, both military schools, are the nation's only all-male, state-supported schools. The Citadel policy is also under legal attack.

Peru clashes

A jungle clash between Peruvian soldiers and pro-Cuban rebels left 11 dead, and Maoist guerrillas attacked a bank and burned buses in Lima, police and news reports said Sunday.

The government on Saturday prolonged for 60 days a state of emergency in Lima, giving police control over the city.

Shining Path guerrillas dynamited a bank and burned four buses in different parts of Lima on Saturday night, police said.

Tibet protests

Several thousand Tibetans protested in Lhasa Monday against Chinese rule of the Himalayan region, Western travelers there said by telephone.

The travelers said the demonstration began peacefully in the afternoon as a protest ostensibly against rising prices and rents.

Periodic protests demanding independence shake Tibet, but they are usually quickly quelled by Chinese police backed by a strong military presence.

Shooting trial

In Baton Rouge, La., a man who mistook a lost Japanese exchange student for a burglar and shot him dead was acquitted of manslaughter in a case that stoked Japan's image of the United States as a violent nation rife with guns.

A jury deliberated about three hours Sunday before finding Rodney Peairs acted reasonably in firing at 16-year-old Yoshihiro Hattori. The teen-ager mistakenly went to Peairs' door Oct. 17 while looking for a Halloween party.

The case caused outrage in Japan, where owning a gun is against the law, with a few limited exceptions.

Germany's asylum policy

The lower house of the German parliament votes tomorrow on whether to end Germany's open-door policy for asylum-seekers, adopted after World War II in atonement for Nazi persecution of foreigners. If it passes, the bill goes to the upper house Friday for final approval, then would become law on July 1.

Some protests are planned and there is some wavering among legislators, but the measure is expected to pass. Voter impatience with a nonstop flood of asylum-seekers is cited as a key reason.

– Compiled by Terri Theiss

Renew China's MFN Status

By Gary L. Ackerman

STATESMANSHIP, it is said, is the art of balancing conflicting claims. As he considers whether to renew China's most favored nation (MFN) trading status, President Clinton will need to pull off the diplomatic version of riding a unicycle blindfolded on a high wire stretched over Niagara Falls

The problem is simple to state: How can we most effectively promote our human rights concerns in China, while at the same time supporting our other objectives? But the answer is maddeningly difficult.

Americans care deeply about human rights in China, and we rightly wish to use whatever influence we might have in Beijing to promote a greater respect for basic individual freedoms. We remain extremely concerned about the future of the pro-democracy activists arrested at the time of the Tiananmen Square tragedy, as well as about other political prisoners. We are troubled by the use of prison labor to manufacture export goods. We abhor China's persecution of its religious minorities. We deplore Chinese activities in Tibet who threaten the very existence of that nation.

But our relationship with China is multifaceted. We also care about the economic liberalization that is changing parts of China, particularly in the south, with unprecedented speed. We also care about China playing a helpful role in Cambodia, where the murderous Khmer Rouge seems intent upon shredding the peace accord and plunging that country back into full-scale war. We care about using China's influence with North Korea to halt Pyongyang's rush to nuclear weapons. We care about Chinese missile technology transfers to Syria, Iran, and Pakistan. We care about China playing a constructive role in the United Nations, where Beijing can veto any action of the Security Council.

The real question is whether we should allow a policy that has laudable goals, but also an arguably better-than-even chance of backfiring, to dictate the relationship's direction. My own sense is that it would be very unwise to permit any one issue to dominate such a multi-faceted relationship.

This is not a recommendation for a business-as-usual approach. Human rights must remain central in our dialogue with the Chinese. China should release its political prisoners, open its prisons to international inspection, permit foreign observers to attend Chinese trials, end its population transfers in Tibet, and halt the jamming Voice of America and other international radio broadcasts.

But unless we maintain a dialogue with Beijing, none of these issues can even be addressed. And the surest way to shut off dialogue is to revoke MFN, or to make its renewal contingent upon the Chinese meeting conditions that are not attainable in the near term.

Relatively speaking, China has undergone a meteoric transformation in recent years. These changes have not come fast enough to satisfy us, but they have been significant all the same. It thus behooves us to support the elements in China that advocate further political and economic reform. We can best do this by cooperating with China on issues where our interests are parallel, just as we seek to entice the Chinese, through incentives, to move closer to us on those issues where our interests diverge.

In this post-cold-war era, the more intertwined the world's economies become, the more stable the world will be and the more susceptible to world opinion governments will become. Let us not confuse toughness with obtuseness. Placing unachievable conditions on the renewal of MFN for China is simply obtuse. It would be the diplomatic equivalent of shooting out the tire of one's unicycle in the middle of a high-wire act.

■ *Rep. Gary L. Ackerman (D) of New York is chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific.*